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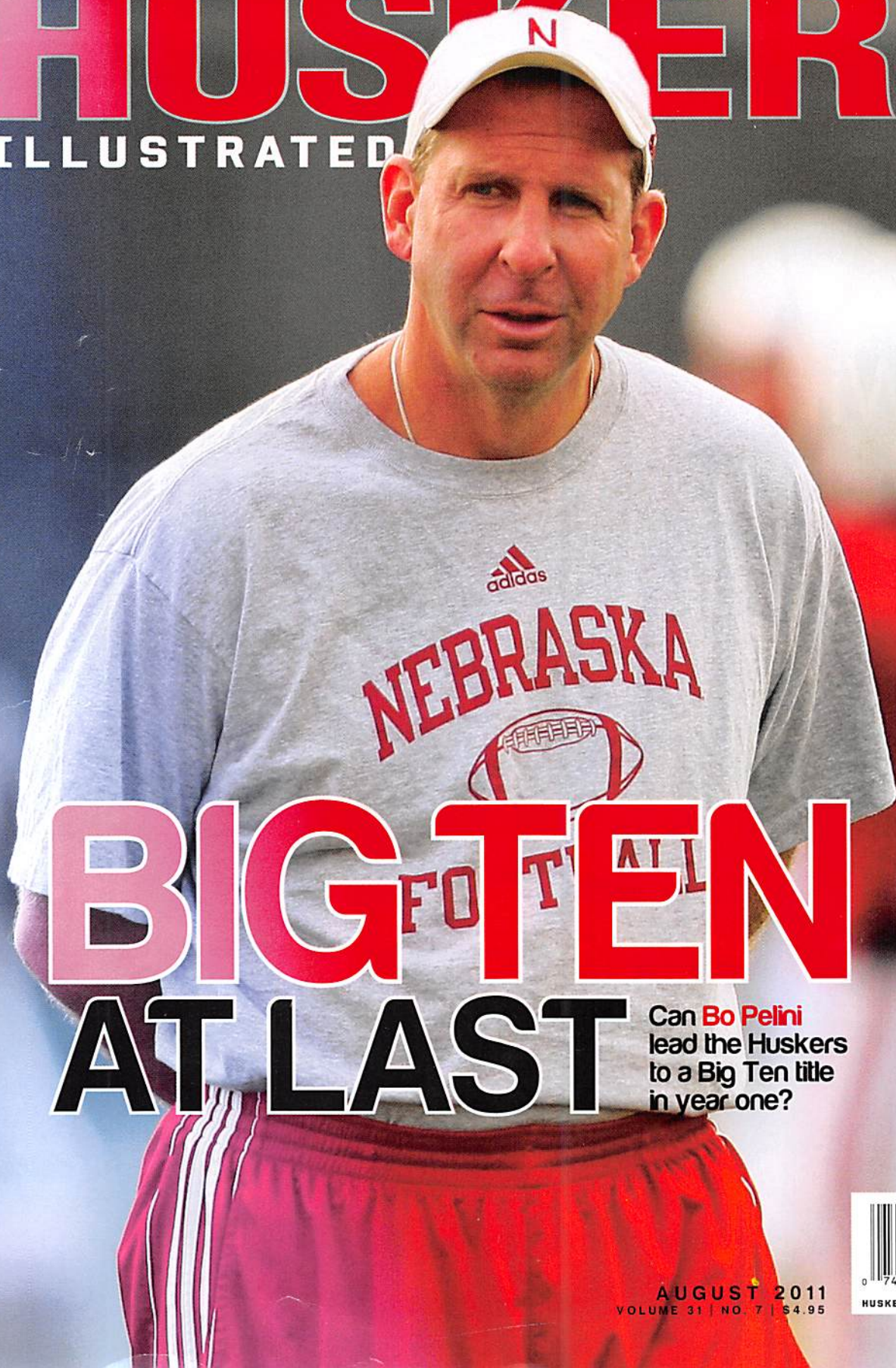
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NU SUCCESS IN BIG TEN
POINT Counterpoint

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

HUSKERS

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BIG TEN AT LAST

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lead the Huskers
to a Big Ten title
in year one?



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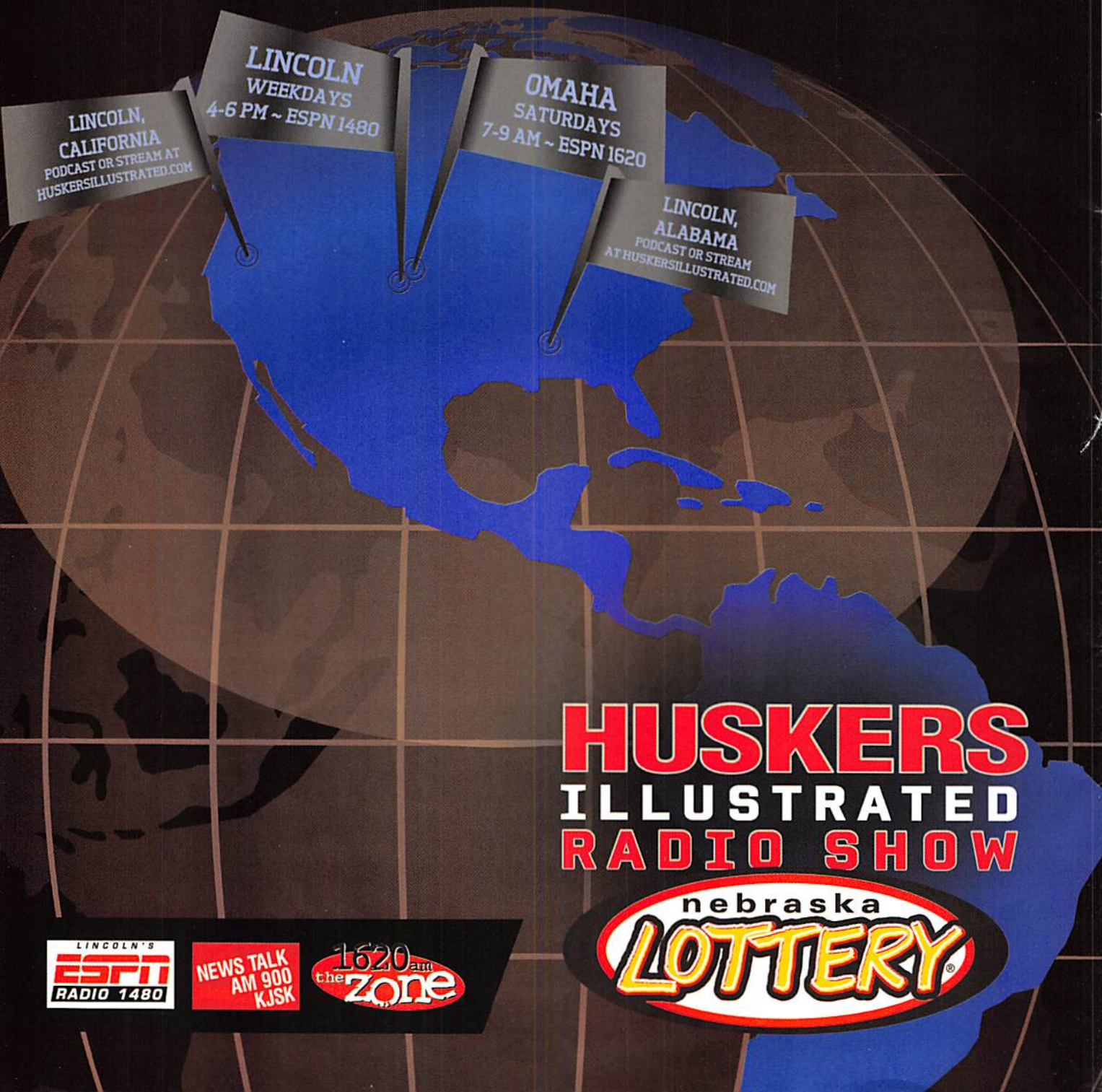


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SEPT. 3	CHATTANOOGA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	BTN
SEPT. 10	FRESNO STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	6:00 P.M.	BTN
SEPT. 17	WASHINGTON	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	ABC
SEPT. 24	@ WYOMING	LARAMIE, WYO.	6:30 P.M.	VERSUS
OCT. 1	@ WISCONSIN	MADISON, WIS.	7:00 P.M.	ABC/ESPN
OCT. 8	OHIO STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7:00 P.M.	ABC/ESPN
OCT. 22	@ MINNESOTA	MINNEAPOLIS	2:30 P.M.	ABC
OCT. 29	MICHIGAN STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 5	NORTHWESTERN	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBA
NOV. 12	@ PENN STATE	UNIVERSITY PARK, PA.	TBA	TBA
NOV. 19	@ MICHIGAN	ANN ARBOR, MICH.	TBA	TBA
NOV. 25	IOWA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11 A.M.	ABC



ON THE COVER

Head coach Bo Pelini is three years older and wiser since taking over the helm of the Husker football program. After transforming the Blackshirts into one of the nation's best defensive units, he has spent the offseason with a laser focus on the offense. Will the changes result in a league title in Nebraska's first Big Ten season and give Pelini his first championship? The challenge begins with Nebraska's Sept. 3 matchup against Chattanooga.

COVER PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



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NEXT ISSUE

Volume 31, Issue 8, the Chattanooga recap and Fresno State preview will be mailed Tuesday, Sept. 6. Check for updates at huskiesillustrated.com.

BIG TEN AT LAST

After a long wait,
Nebraska's first Big Ten
season has finally arrived

IT'S BEEN A LONG WAIT for Husker fans.

One year, 2 months, 24 days. Or 450 days if you've been counting, which many of you probably have.

That's the time between the Big Ten's official announcement on June 11, 2010, introducing Nebraska as its newest member and Sept. 3, 2011 when Nebraska kicks off its first season as a member of the prestigious conference.

Think that's a long time?

How about 89 years, 11 months, 2 days?

That's about how long Nebraska and Oklahoma were officially members of the same conference – dating back to the 1921 season and the Missouri Valley Conference. There will be no more time to lament, criticize or celebrate the decision. Only time to move forward, enjoy the new venues and battle for a championship.

Regardless of the results, 2011 will mark a historic season for the Nebraska football program. It will be a time, for better or worse, when the Huskers blazed a new trail for the program.

While the entire athletic program embarks on this historic journey, its impact on the football program will ultimately be the judge and jury.

The trial begins this season.

On one hand, the Huskers appear to have a wealth of athletic talent. They have a new offensive plan in place and one of the nation's brightest defensive minds as a head coach. On the other hand, they have a nasty schedule and a roster loaded with inexperienced players.

So the question is: Do the Huskers have what it takes to finally win a championship under head coach Bo Pelini?

The question is for you to answer, although Mike Babcock and Terry



Douglass provide compelling answers for and against in our Point-Counterpoint feature on page 26.

We at Huskers Illustrated have worked tirelessly during the offseason to put the pieces in place to cover football like never before.

As always, we strive to put out the best collegiate publication in the country. We have tweaked our recruiting coverage in this publication and we know you will love our notebooks and column by Kris Knowlton.

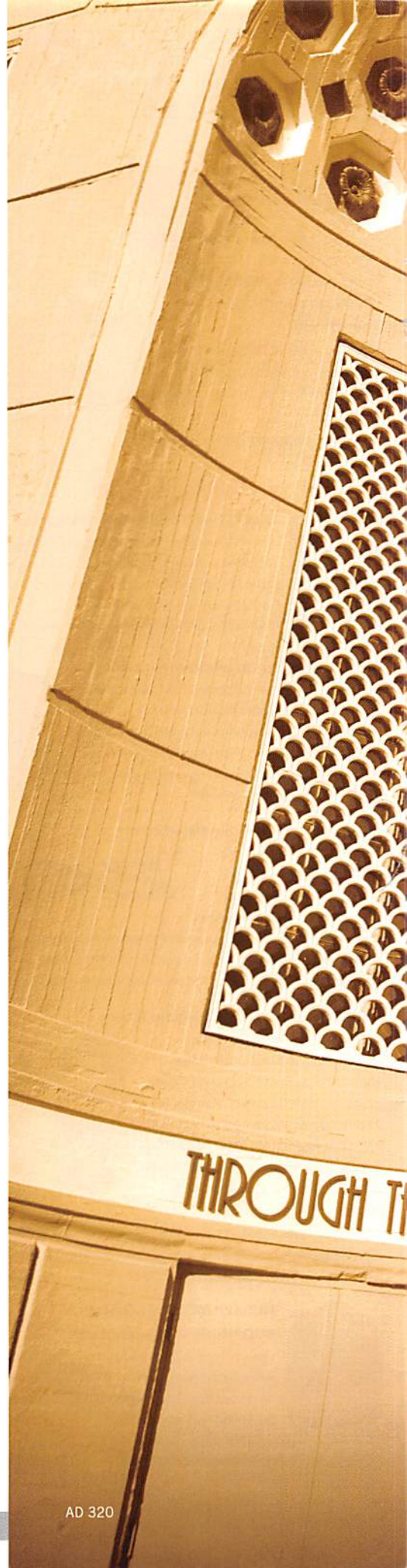
Our new website, HuskersIllustrated.com, is enjoying incredible growth. Thanks to changing technology, nearly 20 percent of our users visit our website through mobile devices (smart phones and tablets). That number will only increase in the coming months and years and we're prepared to handle it.

In July, the Huskers Illustrated Radio Show expanded to air six days a week. No matter your location, you can now listen to great Husker content on the radio, your computer or even your favorite mobile device.

Huskers Illustrated has become the local leader in innovation, publishing our magazine on the iPad (zinio.com/huskers) and will launch a special iPad application in the coming weeks to display our incredible photos and 500-plus magazine covers.

We know how excited Husker fans are for this historic season and Huskers Illustrated is ready to join you for the ride. **N**

Send me your comments or story ideas to aaron@huskersillustrated.com.





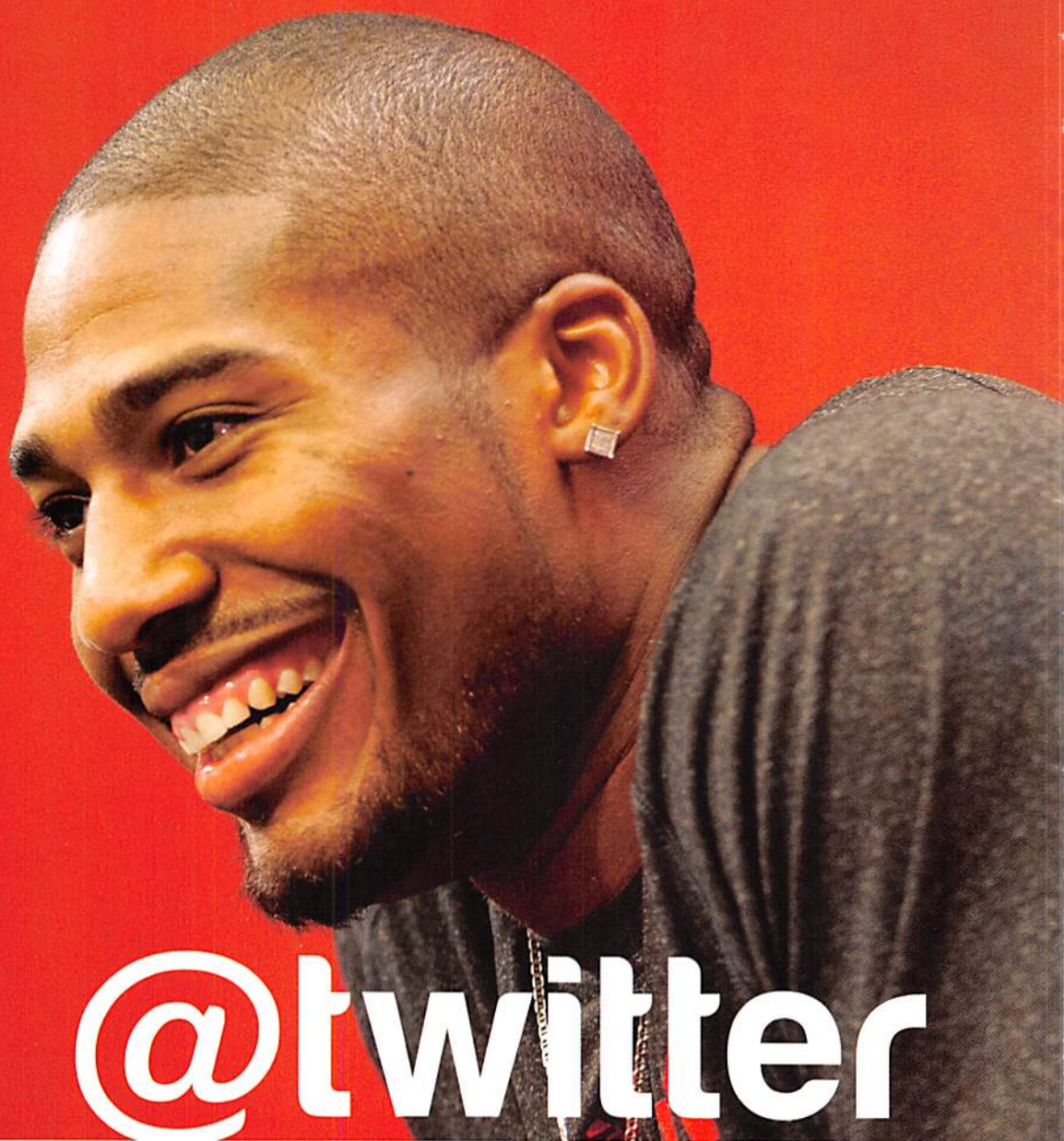
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all @twitter

Husker players are competitive. But when it comes to social media, only one can be king.

BY MIKE BABCOCK

Brandon Kinnie is the Nebraska football team's Twitter king. Ask any Husker.

"He tweets like 100 times a day," said Lavonte David, who has done his share of tweeting.

But Kinnie, aka BK, is "the Twitter guy," David said.

"Absolutely," said Rex Burkhead. "I don't know how he does it. It's unbelievable."

Twitter interest in Burkhead

also was unbelievable, according to Jared Crick, who convinced Burkhead to open a Twitter account when they went to Chicago for Big Ten Media Days.

Actually, David deserves some of the credit for Burkhead's account, too.

"I was on him, hassling him,

about getting Twitter,” David said. “Throughout the whole off-season I was really on him about getting a Twitter account. He just resisted.”

Burkhead finally gave in just before they left for Chicago on Thursday. The plan was to announce his Twitter name (@RBrex22) at noon. Crick predicted he'd have 675 followers by 3 p.m.

Crick's prediction was over-under. Burkhead was over, well over. He had more than 1,000 followers by noon, before anyone had even given him a “shout-out,” said Crick.

By Friday morning's interviews, he had “like 3,000 followers,” Crick said. “And he replies to every single person who writes him, which if he keeps that up, he's going to get carpal tunnel or something.”

Burkhead was surprised by the response. “I just wanted to try it out. I saw how much fun they were having with it, talking to other guys on the team, so I thought I'd give it a try,” said Burkhead.

“I don't know how long I'll be on there, but we'll see.”

With fall camp at-hand, “I don't think there's any way I can keep up with it,” Burkhead said.

His account was still active a week in, however, and he had over 3,400 followers. By comparison, Kinnie (@BKinnie84) had more than 4,200 followers and had tweeted nearly 17,000 times.

“Absolutely, he's the Twitter king,” said Burkhead.

TIME TO TONE IT DOWN

With the start of fall camp, “I think you'll see less football-related stuff” on Twitter, said Austin Cassidy. “It's easy to talk about what we've been doing training and stuff, but I don't think anyone wants to give away what we're doing as far as schemes or trick plays or anything.

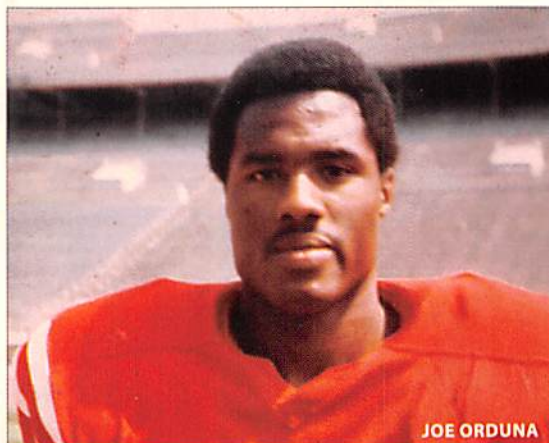
“At least the tweets will be less-football focused, I'm sure . . . at least I hope so.”

HIDDEN IDENTITY, NOT

Jared Crick's Twitter account is @WhiteMamba9fo. “White Mamba” is a nickname given him by Ndamukong Suh and David Harvey when he was a sophomore. “I didn't want anybody to know who I was on Twitter, so I just put that,” Crick said. “Somehow, people still found out.”

HI'S TOP 6

SIX FROM CENTRAL



JOE ORDUNA

That Omaha Central's Gale Sayers picked Kansas instead of Nebraska was among many things contributing to the firing of Husker coach Bill Jennings in 1961. Since then, the Huskers have done well recruiting running backs from Central as the all-time rushing list reflects.

AHMAN GREEN (1995-96-97)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 2	3,880	6.76	42	20

Rushed for 1,877 yards as junior then declared for NFL draft, third-round pick

CALVIN JONES (1991-92-93)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 5	3,153	6.84	40	16

He and Derek Brown, the “We-backs,” each rushed for 1,000 yds in 1992

KEITH JONES (1984-85-86-87)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 14	2,488	6.25	32	10

“End Zone Jones” wore No. 6 jersey, scored 27 TDs final two seasons

JOE ORDUNA (1967-68-70) (PICTURED ABOVE)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 27	1,968	4.02	26	4

Missed 1969 season following knee surgery

LEODIS FLOWERS (1988-89-90)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 30	1,635	6.62	18	7

Didn't play senior season for personal reasons

DAVID HORNE (2002-03-04)

Rank	Yards	Avg/Carry	TD	100-yd
No. 50	1,124	4.57	11	4

Transferred to Northern Iowa after junior season



OLD, AND NEW

Junior running back Rex Burkhead is "excited" about Ron Brown being his position coach. "I love playing for him," Burkhead said. "He's very intense, has a great love for the game and passion for the game, and that's what I want from my coach. He's old school. He's new school."

Brown was a two-time first-team All-Ivy League defensive back at Brown University and looks as if he could man-up on a receiver even now. "He still works out," said Burkhead.

"He's in great shape. He's pretty jacked still."

UP IN THE AIR

Senior wide receiver Brandon Kinnie would like to return kickoffs, if special teams coach John Papuchis would just give him the chance. He returned six kickoffs for 142 yards last season, including a 39-yarder and a 36-yarder against Washington in the 56-21 victory at Seattle.

Returning punts is a different matter, however. "The ball gets too high," said Kinnie.

Would-be tacklers have more time to get down the field and square up.

SIDELINES

WAIT AND SEE

Taylor Martinez was slowed by ankle and toe injuries last season and was less than 100-percent healthy in the spring. So naturally his health going into fall camp was a concern.

He was asked about it before practices began.

"You guys will find out Sept. 3," he said without elaboration.

Undeterred, reporters asked center Mike Caputo about Martinez's health.

"I think whatever he said about his health is what's right," said Caputo. "I'm not going to answer any questions about his health. I think he's all right."

For the record, Martinez looked just fine.

PICK UP THE PACE

Nebraska's up-tempo, no-huddle offense under new coordinator Tim Beck impacted the line's training regimen during the summer. "It's a little bit more cardio than the offensive line's used to," senior center Mike Caputo said as fall camp began. "But you get used to it, and we adjusted things. We did more volume in running in June than we ever have, so I think we're prepared."

The faster pace isn't "that bad versus the huddle," said Caputo. "We have a lot of different tempos and different things, so being set and being ready to go, we might be going like that or we might be sitting there checking, so the defense isn't going to know."

HOLD ON TIGHT

LEGENDARY COACH

JOHN HEISMAN (yes, that Heisman) is credited with telling his players at Auburn: "Gentlemen, it is better to have died as a small boy than to fumble this football."

Nebraska fumbled 45 times last season, losing 16, far too many of each. "We're doing a lot of radical things to

change that," offensive coordinator Tim Beck said early in fall camp. "We have to do something different to hang onto it. It is part of the game, but you want to eliminate it as much as you can."

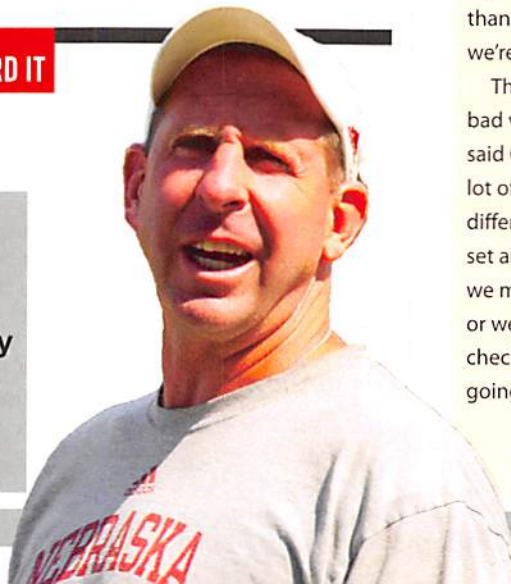
Beck wouldn't say specifically what those radical things were, however.

Bo Pelini

Bo Pelini's statement on Bubba Starling's signing with the Kansas City Royals:

"In the end, Bubba was in a **win-win situation** regardless of his choice, and we respect the decision he has made. I personally will root for Bubba in every game **except when he plays against the Indians!**"

YOU HEARD IT



KEVIN KUGLER

unsportsmanlike conduct



MIKE'L SEVERE

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HAIR-RAISING TALE

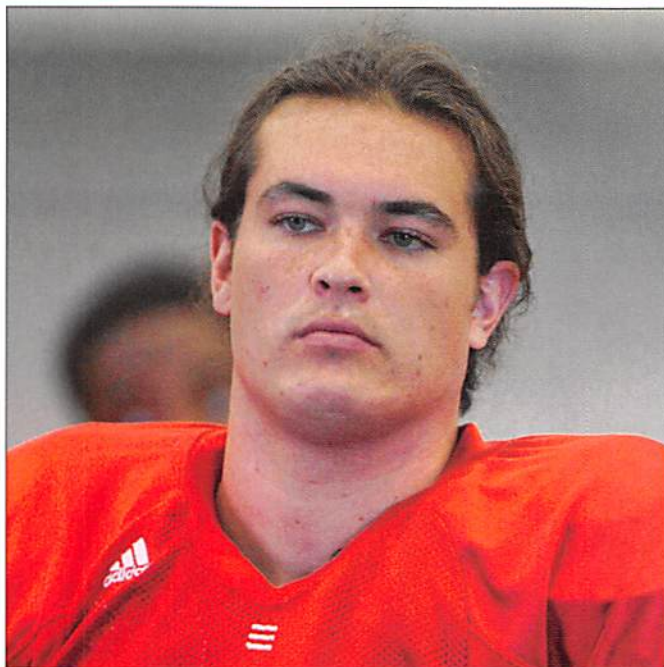
Cameron Meredith couldn't wear his hair long in high school. "I went to a Catholic high school," the Huskers' junior defensive end said. "I had it always short."

Meredith is from Huntington Beach, Calif., and went to Mater Dei High.

His hair wasn't short when fall camp began, and he intended to keep it that way.

"I just let it grow," said Meredith. "It was (at) a really awkward stage at one point, but I was like, 'Once it gets past here, it's going to be awesome.' Now it's awesome."

Bo Pelini doesn't share such an assessment, however. "Coach Bo tells me to cut it every day," Meredith said. "I told him he can try to cut it, but it's not going to be easy for him to come up on me."



PHOTOS BY AARON BABCOCK

DIVIDING TIME

True freshman Jamal Turner, who enrolled and went through spring practice, divided his time between wide receiver and quarterback during fall camp. He was recruited as a quarterback but was moved to wide receiver early in the spring. With the transfer of Cody Green to Tulsa, however, the Huskers began camp with only two scholarship quarterbacks: Taylor Martinez and Brion Carnes (pictured).

Whatever the position, as well as returning kicks, Turner has impressed coaches and teammates. "He's elusive, and



he's a playmaker," said junior linebacker Will Compton. "It's awesome."

TOUGH LUCK

The day after signing an \$8.18 million contract with

the New York Giants, former Husker cornerback Prince Amukamara suffered a broken foot and was sidelined indefinitely.

Amukamara was the 19th player selected in the NFL draft.

Alfonzo Dennard talked to his friend and former teammate after he signed. "I said, 'Congrats on that, man,' because that's a big accomplishment," said Dennard, who could have declared for the draft. "I'm trying to get on the same level he's on. (If) I can't make it, oh well."

As for leaving after his junior season, "I wasn't thinking about money," Dennard said before fall camp. "I'm trying to win a national championship."



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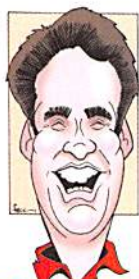
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No Frosh Phenoms

Pay players? Raise academic standards? Limit over-signing of recruits?

Bo Pelini suggested another issue worth considering.

The NCAA reinstated freshman eligibility in 1972. If Pelini had his way, that rule would be rescinded. "I tell you, the one thing I'm for is taking away freshman eligibility," he said.

"I think that would be the best thing that could happen to college football and probably college baseball and athletics in general. I think that would be a tremendous move."

What are the chances of that happening?

"I don't think there's a lot of momentum for that, but I think that making freshmen ineligible would help in a multitude of ways. Let's slow this thing down and make them ineligible. I think ultimately that would help football-wise and academically but would improve the recruiting process in a number of ways. I think there's a pretty good division in the way people feel about that subject."

Pelini has played only a few true freshmen in his three seasons at Nebraska, including Quincy Enunwa, Ciente Evans and Andrew Rodriguez last season.

A DIFFERENT STYLE

How Nebraska's style of play might change in the Big Ten was a topic throughout spring practice, and the issue was raised again at Big Ten Media Days, with a predictable response.

"I don't know if it's about style of play or anything else," coach Bo Pelini said.

"We feel like we can line up and play against anybody in the country.

"We're going to do our thing. We're going to play our way. Obviously you have to make some adjustments according to who you're playing in a particular week. But we feel like our style, the type of kids we recruit, the type of football team we put on the field can fit into any conference."

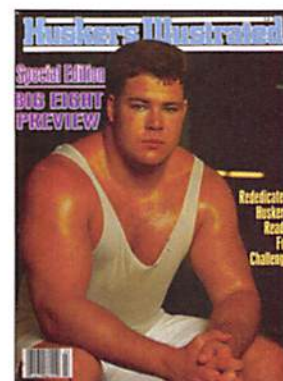
Nevertheless, Nebraska's offense has been simplified, and the defense likely will use more three-linebacker sets in dealing with what figures to be more run-oriented offenses in the Big Ten.

COLLIGAN PASSES AWAY

Nebraska assistant track and field coach Mark Colligan, 47, passed away while in Des Moines with the Huskers for the NCAA Championships on June 8.

He was found unresponsive in his hotel room early Wednesday

afternoon. Colligan had been on the Nebraska coaching staff since 1987 and served as the Huskers' throws coach. He coached five individuals who have won a combined 12 national championships.



25 YEARS AGO

Danny Noonan didn't exactly come out of nowhere. He had, however, played in the considerable shadow of Oklahoma All-American Tony Casillas in the Big Eight. The 6-foot-2, 285-pound Noonan, who was timed in 4.88 seconds in the 40-yard dash and bench pressed 485 pounds, was touted as an Outland Trophy candidate going into the season. BYU's Jason Buck won the Outland, but Noonan earned unanimous All-America honors. Huskers Illustrated picked the Huskers to win the conference title. Oklahoma did.



BLEEDING RED

BY TIM SIEDELL

you still think about it and get angry? You do? Awesome.

COLORADO - In the last 43 games we played against each other, you won seven. I have a bigger rivalry going with the wireless printer in my upstairs office.

Anyway, good luck in the Pac 12. It's cool that the winners of our conferences meet in the Rose Bowl. That means there's a good chance Nebraska will be playing against a team that beat you in the regular season. We'll tell them to say "hi."

TEXAS TECH - That stadium. Those uniforms. That weird mascot with the mask and cape. Everything about you screams Texas High School football. So congratulations,

Red Raiders. Maybe you'll show up every once in a while on the new Longhorn Network.

TEXAS A&M - I was excited about you guys. Then

you came to Lincoln with your male cheerleaders and your precision-marching band and, well, you kinda creeped us out. Bonfires. Collie dogs. I think we could have been in the same conference for fifty years and I still wouldn't have understood you. So long, Aggies. Beat Texas.

KANSAS - All total, the Huskers beat you 91 times.

To put that into terms you understand (basketball), you were our Washington Generals. Goodbye, old friends. Homecoming won't be the same without you.

OKLAHOMA - Oh, you. You were my Darth Vader growing up, and I mean that in a positive way. Your uniforms gave me a little nervous tickle deep in my belly. Boomer Sooner was my Imperial March. Each game, it seemed, was an epic light saber duel. Sometimes you cut off our hand, and yeah, it hurt. Sometimes we cut off yours. But in the end, we respected each other's Jedi powers. I'll miss that. Later Sooners. Respect.

BAYLOR - Were you in the Big 12? Oh, this is awkward. Goodbye, I guess.

TEXAS - You know why we didn't beat you 25 times in a row, Texas? Because we only played you one time between 1970 and 1995. Your brief high point and our brief low point overlapped in our short time together in the Big 12. And yet, consider this. During that time, we had the same number of national titles (one) and the same number of Heisman winners (one). My point? You lucked out, punk. Thank your lucky lone star.

Ah, it feels good to start fresh. Time to make some new friends.

"Tim Siedell is a writer and humorist whose first book, 'Marching Bands Are Just Homeless Orchestras' is available now through Amazon.

Follow him on Twitter: @badbanana.

FAREWELL BIG 12

OUR TIME WITH THE BIG 12 IS OVER, I KNOW. BUT BEFORE THE 2011 SEASON OFFICIALLY KICKS OFF, I'D LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO OFFER UP A PERSONAL GOODBYE TO EACH OF OUR FORMER CONFERENCE MATES.

SO LET'S ADD A SECOND TO THE CLOCK. IT'S THE BIG 12, AFTER ALL. THAT'S ALLOWED.

IOWA STATE - Remember that year when you rewarded your best players with red helmets, while everyone else wore yellow? Didn't exactly think that one through, did you? I loved that about you. Goodbye, Cyclones. We'll put in a good word with Creighton if you ever need to join the MVC.

KANSAS STATE - Type "Wildcats Football" into Google and the top three returns are the University of Arizona, Northwestern, and the University of Kentucky. So, congratulations, KSU. You finished ahead of the fake school in Disney's High School Musical. That's progress! So long, old friends. We'll think of you when we beat Northwestern.

OKLAHOMA STATE - Look at

the Dallas Cowboys. See those classy uniforms with the star on the helmet? That's one way to go. Or look at the Wyoming Cowboys. Dirty brown. Dirty gold. That's the uniforms of a hard-working cowboy. You? You chose neon orange. You went Cowboys & Aliens, emphasis on the aliens. Bold move. Farewell, boys.

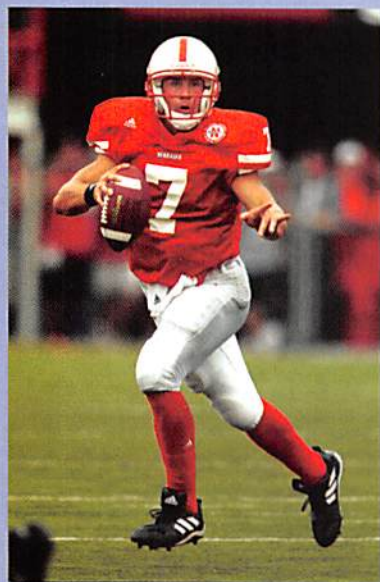
MISSOURI - If we ignore 1979 to 2002, which you no doubt do, you were doing pretty well against us for a while. Nice job. Hey, remember when we caught that ball after it was kicked right before touching the ground and it broke your heart and you cried all weekend long and every once in a while

"Baylor, were you in the Big 12? Oh, this is awkward. Goodbye, I guess."



FEBRUARY 24-27

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TOMMIE FRAZIER



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Battle Creek's Robert Barry makes town proud as a walk-on



THE WAY ROBERT BARRY REMEMBERS,

it was the last Friday in July. After the Huskers' summer-conditioning workout in the morning, he had driven home to

Battle Creek.

The text message came in the afternoon, about 2 p.m. He can be fairly specific on that because of the significance of the automated text from the Nebraska football office. You remember such things.

The text said he was included among the 105 on the fall-camp roster.

He immediately called his dad. "You could just tell how proud he was on the phone," said Barry, a sophomore walk-on. "I hadn't been invited my first two years here.

"To finally get that text, that invite, it was like a sense of accomplishment."

News travels fast in a small town, and Barry began receiving phone calls and texts from family and friends, as well as his high school coaches, "saying how proud they were of me," he said.

Athletics are important in Battle Creek, and among those responsible was long-time high school coach Bob Schnitzler, whose football teams over 39 years were a combined 293-89-7 with four state championships and five runner-up finishes. The 293 victories are a Class C-1 record.

Schnitzler, who also served as athletic director, had similarly dramatic coaching success in other sports, including girls' basketball. Sons Robb and Craig walked on at Nebraska.

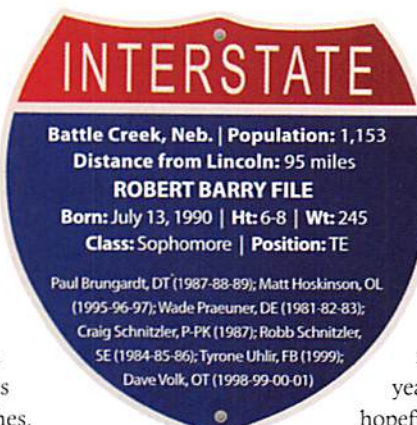
In fact, all of the Husker lettermen listed below played for Bob Schnitzler.

Barry's dad, Bob, also played for Schnitzler then played four years at Wayne (Neb.) State College, where he holds several rushing records, including career yards (3,588).

Barry drew some interest from small colleges in Nebraska for his basketball skills, "but I grew up in a football family and that's kind of always where my heart was," he said.

As with most Husker walk-ons, Barry could have gone to one of the small colleges that recruited him for football and probably be playing now. But as with most Husker walk-ons, "I just wanted to leave no doubt in my mind," he said. "That was one of the big keys."

Barry has yet to get in a game, but being on the fall-camp roster, "I see I'm progressing," he said. "I don't know how much I'll get on the field, but I feel like if I keep working hard, my junior, senior year, down the line, I'll hopefully earn a little bit of playing time, fulfill those childhood dreams."





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2011 Nebraska Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
Sat, Sept. 3	TN at Chattanooga	2:30 p.m.
Sat, Sept. 10	Fresno State	6 p.m.
Sat, Sept. 17	Washington	2:30 p.m.
Sat, Sept. 24	Wyoming	6:30 p.m.
Sat, Oct. 1	Wisconsin *	7 p.m.
Sat, Oct. 8	Ohio State *	7 p.m.
Sat, Oct. 22	Minnesota *	2:30 p.m.
Sat, Oct. 29	Michigan State *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 5	Northwestern *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 12	Penn State *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 19	Michigan *	TBA
Fri, Nov. 25	Iowa *	11 a.m.

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THEBIGTENBEAT

Young man's game

Conference will move to nine-game league schedule beginning with the 2017 season | MIKE BABCOCK



Penn State coach Joe Paterno suffered injuries to his right shoulder and hip in a collision with a player at an early pre-season practice.

The 84-year-old Paterno suffered a hip injury during pre-season practice in 2008 and a leg and knee injury in a sideline collision during a game in 2006.

Being a coach isn't easy. And age can be a factor, though Paterno said at Big Ten Media Days in late July: "I feel good. I'm back to doing a lot of things I used to do, walking a lot more."

Paterno referred to Pro Football Hall of Fame coach Marv Levy, who coached until age 72.

"Marv said, 'I don't think age is a factor.' He said, 'I'm old enough to know my limitations,

and I'm young enough to know how to handle 'em,'" said Paterno.

Paterno became Penn State's head coach in 1966, two seasons before Husker coach Bo Pelini, the fourth-youngest head coach in the Big Ten, was born.

"I still feel like I'm a fairly young head coach," Pelini said in Chicago.

And so he is.

BIG TEN'S YOUNGEST TO OLDEST

Pat Fitzgerald, Northwestern, 36, 6th season
 Luke Fickell, Ohio State, 38, 1st season
 Bret Bielema, Wisconsin, 41, 6th season
 Bo Pelini, Nebraska, 43, 4th season
 Jerry Kill, Minnesota, 50, 1st season
 Kevin Wilson, Indiana, 50, 1st season
 Danny Hope, Purdue, 52, 3rd season
 Brady Hoke, Michigan, 52, 1st season
 Mark Dantonio, Michigan St., 55, 5th season
 Kirk Ferentz, Iowa, 56, 13th season
 Ron Zook, Illinois, 57, 7th season
 Joe Paterno, Penn State, 84, 46th season

EVEN BETTER BRAND

Coach Mark Dantonio at Big Ten Media Days in Chicago on Nebraska's joining the conference: "It strengthens our brand, I think, as a conference."

Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz said of adding Nebraska, which will play the Hawkeyes for a Heroes Trophy every season: "First and foremost, I think it's a fantastic thing for the conference."

Wisconsin's Bret Bielema, whose co-defending champion Badgers open the season on Sept. 1 against UNLV at Camp Randall Stadium, said in Chicago he had already noticed the effect of adding the Huskers. "I can't tell you how many times I've had parents or recruits sitting in my office talking about the Big Ten Network and the exposure that it brings, to bring Nebraska in..."

BIG TEN ROUNDUP BETTER THAN RUTGERS

Said Penn State's Joe Paterno also welcomed Nebraska: "I think most people know I was trying to get another Eastern team in the Big Ten. I was hoping we could either get Rutgers or Pitt or Syracuse because it would be more convenient for us as far as the media and things like that. When we got Nebraska that was a real coup... I think bringing Nebraska in was a real big asset, and I think the league's great."

NINE INSTEAD OF EIGHT

Big Ten teams will move to nine-game conference schedules beginning with the 2017 season. Three teams in each division will play five conference home games during odd-numbered years and the other three teams in each division will play five conference home games during even-numbered years. Nebraska will be on the cycle of odd-numbered years, along with Iowa and Michigan State in the Legends Division and Illinois, Indiana and Ohio State in the Leaders Division.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Nebraska was the only team in the Legends Division with two on the Big Ten pre-season Players to Watch list. Jared Crick and Lavonte David were joined by three quarterbacks: Michigan's Denard Robinson, Michigan State's Kirk Cousins and Northwestern's Dan Persa. Leaders Division Players to Watch were: Illinois quarterback Nathan Scheelhaase, Indiana wide receiver Damarlo Belcher, Penn State linebacker Michael Mauti, Ohio State center Mike Brewster and defensive tackle John Simon and Wisconsin running backs Montee Ball and James White. Players were selected by media voters.

New offensive identity will aim to wear down defenses

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

With the way the 2010 season ended for the Nebraska offense, Sept. 3 cannot come soon enough.

After imploding against Oklahoma in second half of the Big 12 title game and skipping the Holiday Bowl rematch with Washington, it was abundantly clear that a unifying vision was needed for the Nebraska offense.

From all accounts so far this fall, Tim Beck, Nebraska's new offensive coordinator, has brought a clear identity, but few specifics about how the 2011 Nebraska offense will actually look.

In the spring game, Nebraska showed little, running a handful of pass routes and mixing in a little pistol, shotgun and play action. Nebraska fans expecting to see a finished product Sept. 3 in the opener against Tennessee-Chattanooga will also likely be disappointed.

This fall, piecing together clues about Nebraska's offense has become the ultimate parlor game – will it operate more under center? Wildcat? No huddle? Through interviews with various players and coaches early in fall camp, details have begun to emerge about how Nebraska's new offense will look.

Take a look at the offense Beck ran as the passing game coordinator at Kansas in 2007. He had an overlooked, savvy sophomore named Todd Reesing who could chuck the rock. Kansas threw the ball all over the field and got the ball to playmakers in space. Can Taylor Martinez or Brion Carnes be a Reesing-like passer? Maybe. Are they now? No.

Nebraska won't throw the ball 40 times per game in 2011 but will look to get the ball out of Martinez's hands to his speedy skill receivers and backs – think of a pigskin point guard. No more slow-developing crossing route on third-and-7. There will always be a safety valve – a place to dump the ball and get 5 or 6 yards when the play looks dead.

The offense will move fast. No more breaking the huddle with 10 seconds left on the play clock to run a zone-read play. Nebraska is going to get to the line quickly and wear down defenses with quick strikes that keep linemen on the field.

The most important change Beck has made is creating an offensive identity – and though it's unknown publicly – that seems to have unified Nebraska's offense. Beck wants each Nebraska player on the field to understand what



“Nebraska won’t throw the ball 40 times per game in 2011 but will look to get the ball out of Martinez’s hands to his speedy skill receivers and backs – think of a pigskin point guard.”

the other 10 players are doing on a particular play and, more importantly, why.

This summer, wide receivers practiced at each of the various wideout positions to gain a better understanding of the offense and increase versatility. If a player is worthy of getting on the field, in this offense, he will. That approach also had the intended consequence of expanding understanding of the offense as a whole and what certain things are meant to accomplish.

The big what-if for the Nebraska offense is how Martinez and Carnes will mesh with their receivers. Though Nebraska's players have said the offense is simplified, wide receivers are given more route options on each play depending on what the secondary is showing. The quarterback and wide receivers must be on the same page.

“All summer we’ve been working on this new offense and it’s taking time, and there are still bumps in the road, but you have to get comfortable with your quarterbacks and you can’t be too wild out there bouncing around,” junior wide receiver Tim Marlowe said. “It’s basically the chemistry that we’ve been working on.”

With Nebraska's strength again being on defense, the Husker offense doesn't need to be world-class. The Huskers just need to cut turnovers and keep the defense off the field.

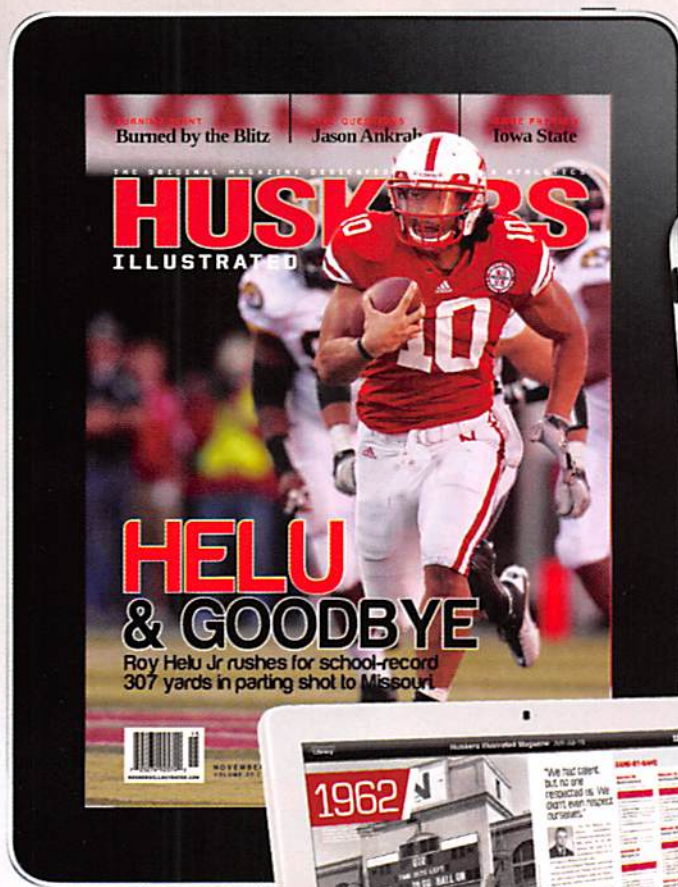
While Nebraska likely won't show much Sept. 3, it will be imperative for the Huskers' offense to have a good first month of the season before making the trek to Madison to take on Wisconsin on Oct. 1 – the Big Ten will be no place to work out offensive kinks. **N**

Michael Bruntz is a staff writer at HuskersIllustrated.com. Follow him on Twitter @michaelbruntz

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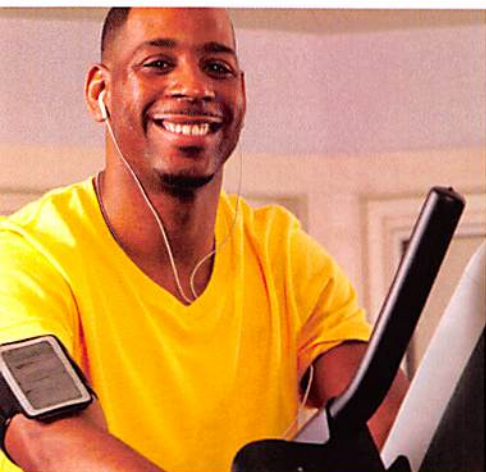
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FIVE QUESTIONS

Quincy Enunwa

Former track athlete had sky high potential

Quincy Enunwa joined the track team as a freshman in high school. He began by running sprints; then coaches figured he was talented enough to help in other areas.

Specifically, high jump.

"They just threw me in," Enunwa said. "At first, I was doing 100 meters and all of that, and then they threw me into high jump, and I just liked it."

He was pretty good at it, too. He attempted – but didn't quite clear – 7 feet by the time he was a senior at Moreno Valley High School.

"I probably could've

got 7," Enunwa said, "but I didn't really get into it my senior year because I already knew I was going to be in football."



Enunwa said his career mark was 6 feet, 8 inches during his senior season.

"The day I got 6-8, it was at my high school and we had a big meet there," he said. "It was at the end of the

meet, and I got lucky the meet was over so everybody was watching me and clapping for me. It was pretty cool."

Now a wide receiver, Enunwa said those high jumping skills come in handy on the football field.

"Oh, definitely," he said. "Jump balls, especially. You've got to get up there."

Enunwa said he would've considered doing high jump in college, if he had an offer. He doesn't see himself doing it anymore, though; he's gained 20 pounds since high school, and now weighs 210.

1

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED How's fall camp?

ENUNWA: Going great. Learning a lot of different things, coming out with stuff we didn't do in the spring. A lot of playmaking going on. Everybody's making plays, every position.

2

HI: Have you ever planked?

ENUNWA: Ha, no, that's more BK's stuff (Brandon Kinnie). I don't do that. Just never really got into it.

3

HI: What's the first concert you'd like to see in

Lincoln's new arena?

ENUNWA:

I don't know.

There's a lot of good artists right now.

I would go see one just for the fun of it.



4

HI: What advice do you give freshmen for the first day of fall camp?

ENUNWA: Drink a lot of water, for sure. And make sure you come out with a vengeance. Don't come out slow.

5

HI: What's the best part of Nebraska's move to the Big Ten?

ENUNWA: New competition. We kind of got tired of Texas and all of them. We want to see some new places, see some new teams.

PHOTO BY ANIRUDH KOU

BASEBALL IT IS

Nebraska's annual Fan Day drew an estimated 6,000 to 6,500 to Memorial Stadium, even though it was in the middle of the afternoon on a Friday. One of the biggest attractions for fans was freshman recruit Bubba Starling, a quarterback from Gardner, Kan. Starling took summer classes at Nebraska and participated in the football team's summer conditioning program but didn't begin practice, even though coach Bo Pelini held a spot for him on the 105-player fall-camp roster. Starling, the fifth player selected in the Major League Draft, subsequently signed a \$7.5 million contract with the Kansas City Royals.



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FIVE REASONS NEBRASKA **WON'T WIN** THE BIG TEN IN 2011

BY TERRY DOUGLASS

1 SCHEDULE

While the Big Ten Conference probably didn't have malice in mind when it made Nebraska's

2011 slate, the league didn't do the Cornhuskers any favors. NU plays perhaps the most talented cross-division opponents possible in preseason No. 10-ranked (USA Today coaches' poll) Wisconsin, No. 16 Ohio State and No. 25 Penn State. After opening Big Ten play at Madison, Wis., Nebraska returns home to host the Buckeyes, making an 0-2 conference start not completely out of the question.

2 NEW OFFENSE

While it seemed most Big Red fans were eager for head coach Bo Pelini make a

change in Nebraska's offensive scheme and/or philosophy, moving Tim Beck into the offensive coordinator role doesn't guarantee instant success. Even though Beck was on staff and already had relationships with the players, learning a new system can still take time. The Huskers, who finished

FIVE REASONS NEBRASKA **WILL WIN** THE BIG TEN IN 2011

BY MIKE BABCOCK

1 DEFENSE

The Huskers have legitimate All-America candidates at all three levels of the defense in seniors

Jared Crick, Lavonte David and Alfonzo Dennard. Plus, they have more depth across the board on defense than they have had in three previous seasons under coach Bo Pelini. The last two defenses, in particular, have been outstanding, and veteran players now have those three seasons of experience in the Pelinis' defensive system. The question is chemistry, and indications are, the Blackshirts have it.

2 TEAM SPEED

Much has been made of the difference between the styles of play in

the Big 12 and the Big Ten, with the Big Ten being more conservative offensively. Though it's difficult to generalize, there's probably an element of truth to such a characterization, and that's to Nebraska's advantage in making the transition. The Huskers

DOUGLASS CONTINUED "WON'T WIN"

113th nationally in passing offense at 150.6 yards per game last season, must find more balance.

3 HEALTH OF TAYLOR MARTINEZ

So much of Nebraska's fate this season appears to ride on the shoulders of one player in quarterback Taylor Martinez. The third-year sophomore was spectacular early on last season, thrusting himself into the Heisman Trophy conversation following his 241-yard rushing performance on a national ESPN telecast at Kansas State. However, an ankle injury hampered Martinez down the stretch as the Huskers' offense was virtually non-existent while NU lost three of its final four games.

4 INEXPERIENCE/INJURIES

With the transfer of Cody

Green to Tulsa, Nebraska could be just an unfortunate play away from having redshirted freshman Brion Carnes as its starting quarterback. Same goes at I-back where the talented Rex Burkhead, whose all-out running style can leave him susceptible to injuries, is the only experienced player at the position, meaning highly touted recruit Aaron Green had better be the real deal. NU must also replace three starters on its offensive line.

5 LACK OF DISCIPLINE

The aggressive style of play taught by head coach Bo Pelini and his staff has certainly benefited Nebraska in many ways. However, uncontrolled aggression and mental mistakes hurt the Huskers on numerous occasions last season as they were penalized a Big 12 Conference-worst 109 times. NU also ranked last in the league with 16 lost fumbles -- mistakes this year's squad simply can't afford if it expects to get to and win the Big Ten Conference title game.

BABCOCK CONTINUED "WILL WIN"

have recruited speed on both sides of the ball, and Big Ten opponents will have to adjust to Nebraska's speed as well as its style of play.

3 OFFENSIVE LINE

Offensive line play has been inconsistent the past two seasons, in part because

of injuries. There's no guarantee health won't be an issue again. Senior tackle Marcel Jones was limited during fall camp because of back issues that sidelined him for all but the final four games in 2010. However, Barney Cotton has gotten help with the offensive line, including John Garrison and grad assistant Vince Marrow. In addition, some good young linemen have enhanced the competition.

4 PLAYMAKERS ON OFFENSE

The Huskers

have big-play potential in newcomers such as quarterback

Brion Carnes, wide receivers Jamal Turner

and Kenny Bell, and true freshman running backs Aaron Green, Ameer Abdullah and Braylon Heard, at least two of whom -- if not all three -- won't redshirt. Turner also can step in at quarterback. "You don't win games with plays. You win 'em with players," offensive coordinator Tim Beck said. "It's a lot easier to call plays when the guy can go 90 yards on one play."

5 BO PELINI

The buck stops here, of course;

that goes without saying, though a coach can't will his team to a championship. Even so, Pelini is a better coach now than when he returned to Nebraska in 2008. And he's a better coach now than when he allowed his passion to get the best of him at Texas A&M last season. He's more concerned about both sides of the ball than when his main concern was to get the defense turned around.





Chattanooga Mocs

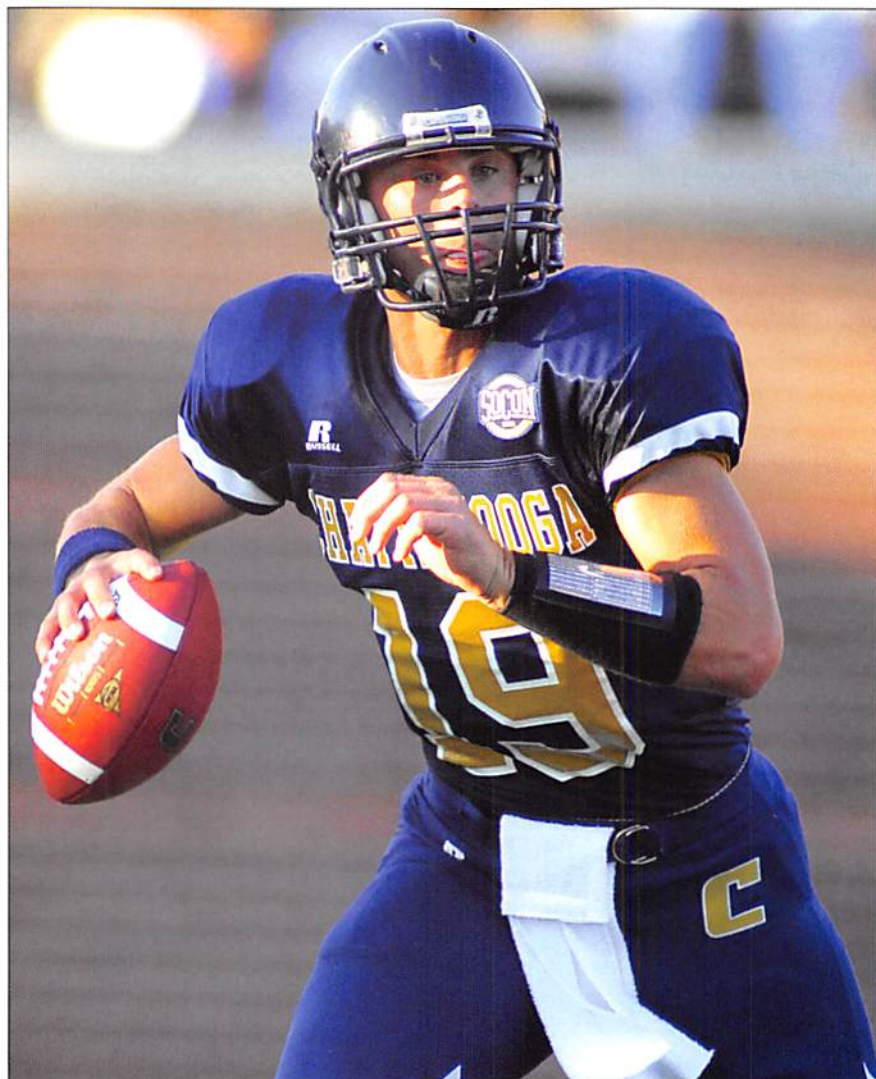
FCS squad no stranger to taking on big name opponents | TERRY DOUGLASS

Like many Football Championship Subdivision programs, Chattanooga has experience playing big-name programs, so it's unlikely the Mocs will be overly intimidated by their trip to Lincoln to play

Nebraska at Memorial Stadium.

After all, Chattanooga has faced the eventual BCS national champion in each of the previous two seasons (Alabama in 2009 and Auburn in 2010) and played at both Florida

State and Oklahoma in 2008. The Mocs haven't been overly successful against top-level FBS programs, however, losing their last four meetings by a combined score of 210-33.



Quarterback B.J. Coleman was named to the 2011 Walter Payton Award Watch List...pre-season 2nd Team All-SoCon...made a tremendous impact on the program since transferring from Tennessee...has 5,344 career passing yards, fifth all-time at UTC...needs 526 yards to pass Mickey Brokas (1970-73) for fourth...sixth Moc to throw for 5,000 yards in a career...has 43 career TD passes, second all-time at UTC and needs seven more to break Chris Sanders' (199-00) record...has 16 200+ passing games, second on the Mocs' career list...one of two Mocs in school history with six+ 300-yard passing games.



HEAD COACH

Resume: Russ

Huesman was hired in December 2008 to restore the tradition

he helped build as a defensive back at Chattanooga from 1978-81 when the Mocs won a pair of Southern Conference titles. Chattanooga finished 6-5 last season just two years after the program was 1-11.

KNOW YOUR FOE

Joel Bradford, Sr., WR



After playing defensive back in 2009, Bradford returned to receiver and earned AP third-

team All-America honors with a single-season school-record 1,284 receiving yards in 2010.

B.J. Coleman, Sr., QB



The Tennessee transfer and three-year starter ranks fifth on the program's all-time career passing charts with 5,344 yards. He threw for 2,996 yards and 26 TDs last season.

Ryan Consiglio, Sr., LB



The strong-side linebacker ranked 28th nationally in the FCS with 10 tackles per game last season and was his squad's top tackler in 2009.

2011 SCHEDULE

9/3	at Nebraska
9/10	JACKSONVILLE ST.
9/17	at Eastern Kentucky
9/24	at Appalachian St.
10/1	THE CITADEL
10/8	at Georgia Southern
10/15	WESTERN CAROLINA
10/22	at Elon
10/29	FURMAN
11/5	at Samford
11/19	WOFFORD

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QUICK PICKS



Aaron Babcock
(79-33)



Mike Babcock
(81-31)



Michael Bruntz
(n/a)



Terry Douglass
(79-33)



Kevin Kugler
(80-32)



Matt Davison
(81-31)

Chattanooga at Nebraska	NU 49-3	NU 45-6	NU 52-10	NU 48-13	NU 45-3	NU 42-6
Oregon vs. LSU	LSU 27-20	ORE 31-17	LSU 21-17	LSU 21-17	LSU 31-28	ORE 28-24
UNLV at Wisconsin	UW 56-14	UW 45-10	UW 63-17	UW 31-17	UW 45-17	UW 38-17
Miami (OH) at Missouri	MU 24-12	MU 28-13	MU 49-10	MU 23-14	MU 38-10	MU 31-13
Minnesota at USC	USC 35-14	USC 35-7	USC 41-21	USC 38-9	USC 41-7	USC 41-10
Boise State at Georgia	BSU 28-27	BSU 31-27	BSU 27-17	UGA 27-24	UGA 28-27	BSU 31-27
Fresno State at Cal	Cal 20-17	Cal 28-24	CAL 28-21	Cal 30-10	Cal 24-20	Cal 34-21
Western Michigan at Michigan	UM 42-17	UM 38-7	UM 31-17	UM 41-20	UM 45-21	UM 35-21

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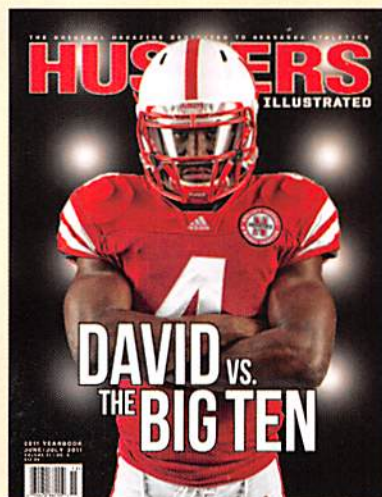
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IN THE Red Zone

MARCEL JONES | PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN



Roommates look to finish as champions

Seniors Jared Crick and Marcel Jones have been rooming together almost from the beginning, when they were freshmen, trying to adjust to college and the demands of football.

Crick, the small-town guy from Cozad, Neb., is a defensive lineman – he began as a defensive end then moved to tackle – and Jones, the big-city guy from Phoenix, is an offensive lineman, specifically a tackle, so they've occasionally lined up against each other in practice. But they've always left that competition on the field, never had issues with each other off it.

That's because "our personalities are pretty compatible," Jones said early in fall camp.

"It's kind of a perfect fit," said Crick. "We've never got in any fights, any disputes about anything. We're good friends, so clearly we're not going to fight over something little."

"It's always been a great relationship between us."

Well, actually, there is something little that's come between them.

"I might have lied," Crick said.

When the two play each other in video games it can get fairly heated, like the time Crick slammed a controller, smashing it to pieces, after squandering

a big lead and losing to Jones.

Crick can't remember what game they were playing, maybe NBA 2K or Madden Football. Jones is especially good at those, while he generally wins at FIFA Soccer and shooting games, such as Call of Duty, "because I've got smaller hands," said Crick. "It's easier for me to work the trigger."

Whatever this particular game, the controller wasn't salvageable, as has been the case with two others. "That's probably the closest we came to throwing blows," Crick said.

Their friendship is characteristic of what they see as a unique chemistry on coach Bo Pelini's fourth team, a chemistry that contributes to confidence going into Nebraska's first Big Ten season.

The chemistry is "just tremendous," said Jones, who was held out of practices early in fall camp because of a sore back; he played in only four games last season because of back issues.

"I've seen us grow, pretty much, and the love for each other on this team has grown so much," Jones said. "With that love we're going to play harder for each other. We're going to play longer. We're going to play stronger. It's going to make you play harder for your brother."

"That chemistry is going to take us (further) than we've ever been."

For he and Crick, that means a Big Ten championship, at the very least.

"I couldn't cap off my career as a Big 12 champ; I was so close two times," said Jones. "It's the final dance now. So I'll cap it off as a Big Ten champ."



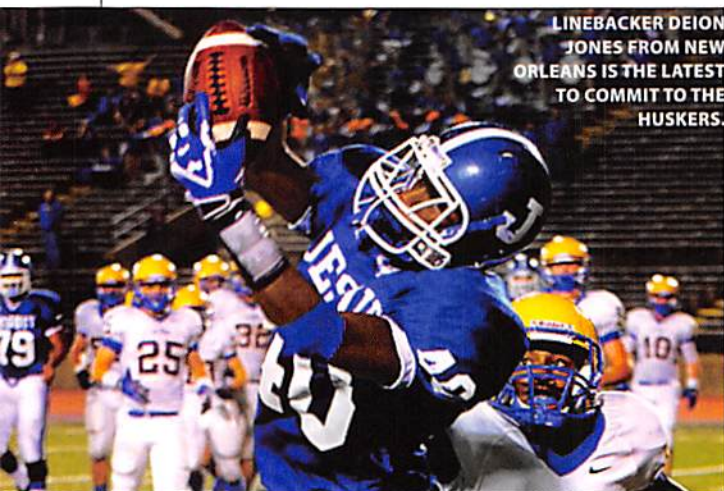
JARED CRICK | PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



BY KRIS KNOWLTON
RECRUITING EDITOR,
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Position Needs

Nebraska lands New Orleans linebacker recruit, still has a number of spots to fill for 2012 class



LINEBACKER DEION JONES FROM NEW ORLEANS IS THE LATEST TO COMMIT TO THE HUSKERS.

Kris Knowlton of *HuskersIllustrated.com* breaks down Nebraska's 2012 recruiting by position and the number of expected signings at each position.

QUARTERBACK: 1-2

Nebraska has a great shot at landing two signal-callers in this class with 5-star Devin Fuller from Old Tappan High School in Westfield, N.J., and 3-star Tommy Armstrong from Byron P. Steele High School in Schertz, Texas. The 6-0, 185-pound Fuller is a dual-threat athlete with fantastic top-end speed.

Fuller scored 52 touchdowns and had more than 4,000 all-purpose yards last season. Nebraska is one of a few schools recruiting him as a quarterback. That helped the Huskers make his list of top 11 schools going forward, and he also likes

the offensive system.

Armstrong is another dual-threat target but is a somewhat undervalued recruit right now, in part because he benefited from having Malcolm Brown -- one of the top running backs in the 2011 class -- in the backfield with him during his school's state-title run last year.

RUNNING BACK: 0

The Huskers signed two highly-touted running backs in Aaron Green and Ameer Abdullah in their 2011 class. Nebraska is expected to sign a smaller-than-usual class of about 16 recruits this season due to a lack of available scholarships and most likely won't take another back this time around.

WIDE RECEIVER: 1-2

Nebraska got off to a

great start at this position by landing a commitment from 4-star Jordan Westerkamp from Montini High School in Lombard, Ill. Westerkamp does not have ideal size at 6-1 and 190 pounds but has been consistently productive with 140 catches, 2,687 yards and 37 touchdowns in his career. He also is a proven winner, leading Montini to back-to-back state championships.

Ghierry Vanderkuyp from Hialeah, Fla., High School is listed as a 3-star athlete but wants to play wideout at the next level. The 6-3, 180-pounder has talked recently about committing to the Huskers.

TIGHT END: 1-2

After just missing on a couple of highly-touted prospects at this position in June, Nebraska extended a scholarship offer to Lincoln, Neb., Southeast tight end Sam Cotton, the brother of current Huskers Ben and Jake Cotton and son of offensive line coach Barney Cotton. The 6-3, 240-pounder was able to impress Husker coaches with his pass-catching ability at camp in Lincoln this summer.

It appears Nebraska

would still like to sign more of a vertical threat at this position and recently made the top-five list of Orlando David, a 6-2, 210-pounder from Chaminade-Madonna Prep High School in Hollywood, Fla.

OFFENSIVE LINE: 2

Andrus Peat is Nebraska's biggest remaining target -- literally and figuratively. The 6-7, 280-pounder is the fifth-best player in 247Sports' Top 100 this year and the brother of 2011 Husker defensive tackle commit Todd Peat, Jr. The lure of playing with his older brother at the next level already has the Huskers in a select group of schools near the top of his list, which includes Notre Dame, USC and Texas.

Nebraska has also landed a commitment on the line in this class, Paul Thurston, a 6-5, 275-pound guard from Arvada, Colo., West High School. Thurston committed in June. The 4-star describes himself as a run-blocking specialist and said he uses his good feet and athleticism to get out in open space to make blocks.

DEFENSIVE LINE: 2-3

The Huskers landed

Sartor Hamann
presents
**DIAMONDS IN
THE ROUGH**
Each week on
Huskers Illustrated Radio



a major steal from Ohio by plucking a commitment from 4-star defensive end Greg McMullen. The 6-5, 255-pounder from Archbishop Hoban High School in Akron had offers from almost every major program, including the in-state Buckeyes.

Vincent Valentine, a 6-4, 300-pound defensive tackle from Edwardsville, Ill., High School has the Huskers ranked as his No. 1 choice. Valentine has struck up a strong relationship with Nebraska defensive line coach John Papuchis and plans to visit Lincoln for the Michigan State game on Oct. 29.

Nebraska also has a scheduled official visit from 4-star defensive end Jonathan Bullard. The 6-4, 245-pounder from Crest High School in Shelby, N.C., is the 61st-best overall player in the country, according to 247Sports, and plans to visit the Huskers for the Ohio State game on Oct. 8. That's an important date to keep in mind as Rose, McMullen, Westerkamp and potentially more recruits will all be visiting Lincoln at the same time for that game.

LINEBACKER: 3

This is probably the biggest position of need for Nebraska in this class and the Huskers have already landed two commitments in 4-star Michael Rose from Rockhurst High School in Kansas City, Mo., and Deion Jones from Jesuit High School in New Orleans. At 6-0 and 220 pounds, Rose is ranked as the seventh-best inside linebacker in the country, according to 247Sports.

Rose might be Nebraska's

most important commit at this point, not only because of his talents on the field, but also because of his skills as a recruiter. Rose has reached out to several recruits like Valentine and 4-star safety Jordan Diggs, just to name a couple.

Jones is Nebraska's latest commitment, pledging his services to the Huskers in early August. The 6-2, 200-pounder had 118 tackles and two sacks last year. To round out the class, Nebraska is targeting 4-star Quanzell Lambert from Timber Creek High School in Sicklerville, N.J. Lambert is planning on officially visiting Nebraska.

SECONDARY: 2-3

Nebraska is in great shape with two 4-star defensive backs in safety Jordan Diggs and cornerback Brandon Beaver. Diggs likes Nebraska's tradition on defense and has struck up a friendship with Rose. The Florida product from Island Coast High School in Cape Coral is also friends with 3-star cornerback Tyreece Jiles from Cape Coral High School. Nebraska appears to have a great shot of landing Diggs if his visit to the Ohio State game on Oct. 8 goes well, and Jiles might join him in committing to Nebraska.

Beaver is Nebraska's most complete cornerback prospect remaining. The 6-1, 180-pounder from Dominguez High School in Compton, Calif., said he knows he'll visit Nebraska, Washington and Arizona this fall for official visits. He is ranked as the No. 77 overall player in the 2012 class and seventh at his position.

2012 NEBRASKA COMMITS



★★★★

GREG MCMULLEN

DE, 6-5, 225, Akron, Ohio
(Archbishop Hoban)
247Sports Rating: 94



★★★★

MICHAEL ROSE

LB, 6-0, 225, Kansas City Mo.
(Rockhurst)
247Sports Rating: 93



★★★★

PAUL THURSTON

OT, 6-5, 275, Arvada, Colo.
(Arvada West)
247Sports Rating: 92



★★★★

JORDAN WESTERKAMP

WR, 6-1, 190, Lombard, Ill.
(Montini Catholic)
247Sports Rating: 90



★★★

SAM COTTON

TE, 6-4, 235, Lincoln, Neb.
(Lincoln Southeast)
247Sports Rating: 81



DEION JONES

OLB, 6-2, 200, New Orleans
(Jesuit)

247Sports Rating: Not yet rated

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Coaching staff taking unique approach by finding athletes

BY KRIS KNOWLTON

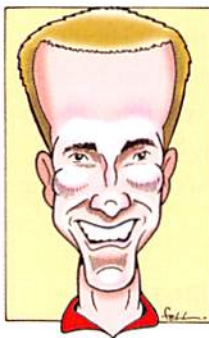
It's common for graduating high school seniors not to know what their college major will be. Sometimes, even college-bound football players don't know what position to play at the next level. Nebraska has been recruiting such versatile players for the 2012 class, and with great success. The sales pitch is this: At Nebraska, you don't have to choose.

The Huskers are recruiting athletes, which is nothing new, but this year there has been an emphasis on recruiting versatile players at almost every position. The Nebraska coaching staff is selling these athletic recruits on the fact that their diverse skill sets will be used in multiple ways if they commit to playing in Lincoln.

Alonzo Moore might be the most straightforward example of this. The wide receiver-quarterback-cornerback prospect from Winnfield, La., High School recently told Huskers Illustrated that he's close to committing to Nebraska, mainly because of the Husker coaching staff's believing in his diverse skill set and telling him that he can join the team as an athlete and land at whatever position best suits him from there.

But Nebraska is also taking this same approach in a more subtle way with recruits that are listed as safeties, linebackers, wide receivers, tight ends and defensive linemen. Husker coaches are basically telling kids that they don't want them to come to Nebraska to play a certain position such as linebacker; they want the kids to come to Nebraska to play defense. The sales pitch is: Come to Nebraska to be a Blackshirt, an all-around defender.

Take 247Sports 4-star safety Jordan Diggs from Island Coast High School in Cape Coral, Fla., for example. There's no doubt Diggs projects as a safety at the next level with his hard-hitting style, but what has Diggs so interested in the Huskers is that they don't want him to be just a safety. They are recruiting him as a safety-linebacker hybrid to shut down more run-oriented Big Ten Conference offenses and be a new kind of "peso" player.



Nebraska wants its safeties to be able to play the run like a **linebacker** would and its linebackers to play the pass like a **safety** would.

Nebraska wants its safeties to be able to play the run like a linebacker would and its linebackers to play the pass like a safety would. The Huskers are even selling defensive linemen on versatility, telling 4-star Taiwan Johnson from Manvel, Texas, High School that they want to stand up the 6-3, 240-pounder at the line of scrimmage on some plays to make the offense worry about whether he'll rush the passer or drop back in coverage.

The result of this recruiting tactic is not only that many recruits are growing enamored with the idea of being do-it-all Cornhuskers, but if successful, these players will always keep their opponent guessing. Versatile players will help the Blackshirts against hurry-up, no-huddle, or balanced offenses because they will always have a player on the field that can make a play on the ball no matter what formation, down, distance, situation or play occurs.

Nebraska would no longer have to substitute a more traditional, run-stopping linebacker during certain situations or a pass-rushing defensive lineman on third-and-longs because those players would already be on the field. From game-to-game, it wouldn't matter if the Huskers were facing the spread attack from Northwestern or the downhill running attack of Wisconsin, the same players would be on the field all season. This will also help team chemistry because, for the most part, the same group of Blackshirts would be on the field together, learning each other's tendencies and building rapport.

As the college game evolves and coaches use more athletic players in creative ways, Nebraska is changing right with it via its recruiting strategy, ensuring that the Huskers will be ready for anything that's thrown, run, tossed, shoveled or even jump-passed at them. **N**



CATCHING UP WITH JEFF KINNEY

BY RANDY YORK

Time stokes Kinney's desire to replace '71 championship ring

The clock will stop, if only for a few minutes, when Nebraska hosts Tennessee-Chattanooga in its first-ever game as a member of the Big Ten Conference. And Jeff Kinney will probably be the only Husker player on the field celebrating the 40th anniversary of the 1971 team without his national championship ring.

"Someone stole it from my locker at a Lincoln health club sometime in the late 1970s," Kinney said. "I got done working out and it was gone. Obviously, it was pretty special, but I figured I had the one from 1970, so I'd be all right without it."

Oh, how the years go by.

"Forty years ... that really makes a guy stop and think how fast time goes by," Kinney said. "That's a vapor. Life's a vapor. Time's a vapor. We still think the same way, but after 40 years, we all look a lot different."

And feel a lot different. Take the ring Kinney lost. The Husker All-America

I-back gave his 1970 national championship ring to his daughter, Kristin. Now, for the first time in three decades, he's thinking about finding a vendor to replace his '71 ring.

"I've never been one to make a big deal out of things like that," Kinney said. "But as the years go by, I realize that little ring is part of a legacy, and I'd like to pass it on and say: 'Here, take this. Your dad was part of this, and I'd like you to have it.'"

In July, Kinney moved to Castle Rock, Colo. He makes a 30-minute drive to downtown Denver every day where he is now the

senior vice president for the Royal Bank of Canada. "I see the snow caps on the Rocky Mountains every day," he said. "It's a gorgeous drive, absolutely gorgeous."

The scenery makes Kinney think about the opportunity Nebraska football now has to paint some beauty of its own. "I'm excited about us joining the Big Ten and getting the opportunity to play in all of those new stadiums," he said.

It's going to create some interesting conversations when Kinney joins his '71 teammates at a Memorial Stadium celebration honoring what many still call the best college football team of all time. "We were a great football team loaded with talent and leaders, and we had a mindset to go out

"Time's a vapor. We still think the same way, but after 40 years, we all look a lot different."

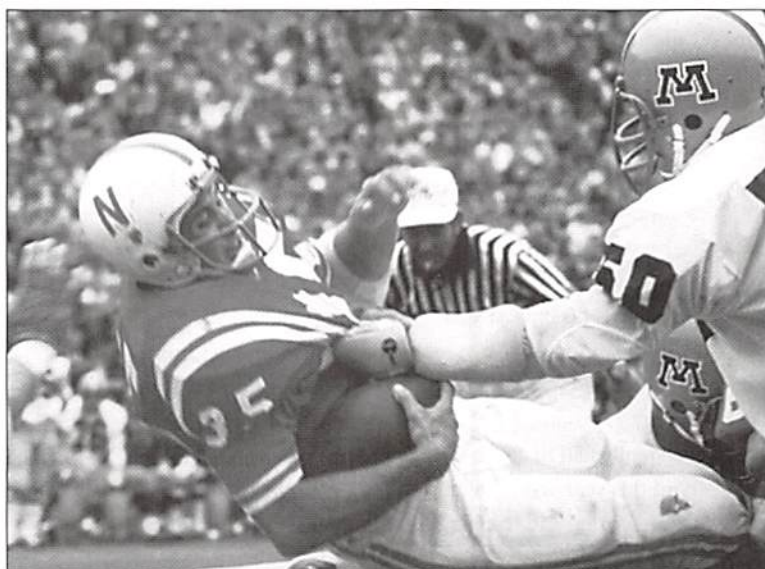
every single week to show everyone how great we were," Kinney said.

The '71 Huskers beat the Nos. 2, 3 and 4 teams that finished behind Nebraska in the final AP poll of the season – Oklahoma, Colorado and Alabama. The OU game

was the only one of the three that was close, and Kinney's fourth touchdown that Thanksgiving afternoon decided it, 35-31. There was 1 minute and 38 seconds remaining on the clock.

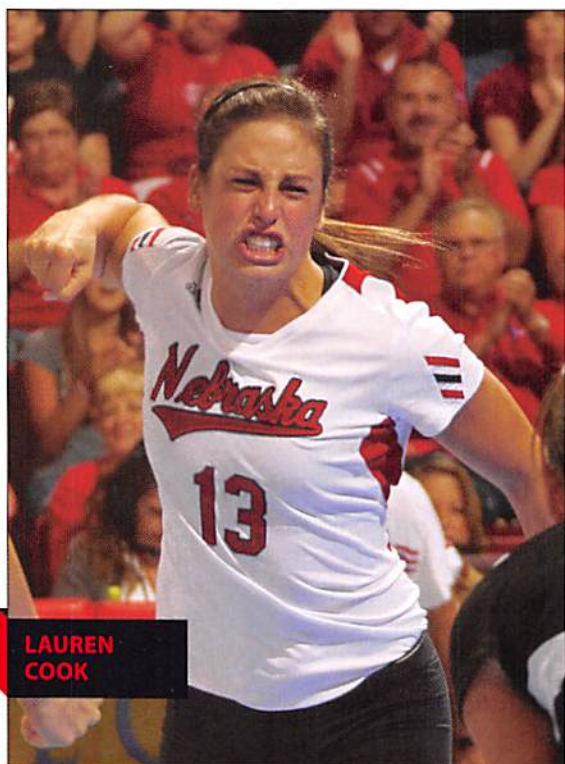
That time is still a treasure, and it still lives in Jeff Kinney's mind.

So maybe, just maybe, it's time he gets that ring back.



Huskers take new look, new faces into first Big Ten season

Changes in system, assistant coaches and conference add up to big challenge for Huskers | BOB HAMAR



LAUREN COOK

PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

LAUREN COOK AND THE HUSKERS MUST REPLACE THREE ALL-AMERICANS IN THEIR FIRST SEASON IN THE BIG TEN

It's going to be a challenging season for John Cook and his Nebraska volleyball team.

Not only did they lose three All-Americans (Lindsey Licht, Sydney Anderson and Tara Mueller) and one of the top liberos around (Kayla Banwarth) from last year's 29-3 Big 12 championship team, but they also face the challenge of moving to the Big Ten Conference.

But wait. There's more

Cook also has two new full-time assistant coaches in Dan Meske and Dan Connors along with former NU setter Maggie Griffin who is in her first season as a volunteer assistant.

Because of all the newness in 2011, Cook says it feels like his biggest year with the program.

"But it also creates great energy," he said. "I feel like I've really had to coach hard this year and do a lot of mentoring and teaching.

Day one we're learning how to tie our shoes and put on our socks and how to line up on the line where a year ago we were already game-speed, mid-season mode because we didn't have any freshmen, so it's been a dramatic change from that."

No doubt the Huskers will have a different look this year. They have gone away from the 6-2 offense they ran in 2010 with Anderson and Lauren Cook sharing the setting duties to the more traditional 5-1 with Lauren as the lone setter.

"I love it," said the coach's daughter, who spent a year at UCLA before transferring back to Nebraska. "I eat, live and breathe 5-1. It's what I ran at UCLA. I'm most comfortable in a 5-1. It's what I've run my whole life. It obviously has been somewhat successful. I love to run fast. I love to mix it up and work into other defensive systems."

The Huskers may have lost some firepower from last year, but Lauren Cook will still have a number of options when she's looking for a place to set. Juniors Hannah Werth and Gina

Cook challenging team

John Cook has lined up some challenging road matches for the Huskers this year. They will likely face sold-out venues when they open the season at the Lobo Classic at New Mexico State Aug. 26-27 and again at Colorado State on Sept. 2.

"I want to take our team to two tough places that will have packed arenas," Cook said. "Both those universities are making a big deal out of us coming there, and they will be sold out."

Not so fast

Cook said the Huskers have to keep their mind on their upcoming opponents during the non-conference portion of their schedule.

"We have to stay in the moment," Cook said. "We can't be looking forward to the Big Ten."

Too late. Lauren Cook already has that Sept. 21 Penn State match on her mind.

"Honestly, that's all I'm looking forward to right now is that first (Big Ten) game in the Coliseum," Lauren said. "It's going to be a battle."



Big Ten TV

The Huskers will be on NET some this year, but they won't be on as much as in the past. The Big Ten network will carry some matches, but most of those will be tape delayed. John Cook said fewer NET matches are one of the negatives to joining the Big Ten.

"I'm still hopeful that we can continue to have a great relationship where we can broadcast a lot of our matches here in Nebraska (on NET) and still be a great part of the Big Ten network as well," he said.

2011 Volleyball Schedule

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
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AUG. 20 RED/WHITE MATCH NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

MCM ELEGANTE LOBO CLASSIC

AUG. 26 NEW MEXICO ST. AT ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. 6 P.M.

AUG. 27 NEW MEXICO AT ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. 8:30 P.M.

SEPT. 2 COLORADO STATE AT FORT COLLINS, COLO. 8 P.M.

SEPT. 3 ALBANY AT FORT COLLINS, COLO. 1 P.M.

AMERITAS PLAYERS CHALLENGE

SEPT. 8 CREIGHTON NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

SEPT. 9 ST. MARY'S NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

SEPT. 10 WEBER STATE NU COLISEUM 2 P.M.

SEPT. 17 IOWA STATE DEVANEY CENTER 7 P.M.

SEPT. 21 PENN STATE* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

SEPT. 24 OHIO STATE* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

SEPT. 30 MICHIGAN STATE* AT EAST LANSING, MICH. 7 P.M.

OCT. 1 MICHIGAN* AT ANN ARBOR, MICH. TBA

OCT. 7 PURDUE* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

OCT. 8 INDIANA* NU COLISEUM 3 P.M.

OCT. 14 WISCONSIN* AT MADISON, WIS. 7 P.M.

OCT. 15 MINNESOTA* AT MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. 7 P.M.

OCT. 19 IOWA* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

OCT. 22 ILLINOIS* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

OCT. 28 OHIO STATE* AT COLUMBUS, OHIO 7 P.M.

OCT. 29 PENN STATE* AT UNIVERSITY PARK, PA. TBA

NOV. 4 MICHIGAN* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

NOV. 5 MICHIGAN STATE* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

NOV. 11 INDIANA* AT BLOOMINGTON, IND. 7 P.M.

NOV. 12 PURDUE* AT WEST LAFAYETTE, IND. TBA

NOV. 16 MINNESOTA* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

NOV. 19 WISCONSIN* NU COLISEUM 7 P.M.

NOV. 23 IOWA* AT IOWA CITY, IOWA 7 P.M.

NOV. 26 NORTHWESTERN* AT EVANSTON, ILL. TBA

NCAA TOURNAMENT

DEC. 1-3 1ST/2ND ROUNDS AT CAMPUS SITES TBA

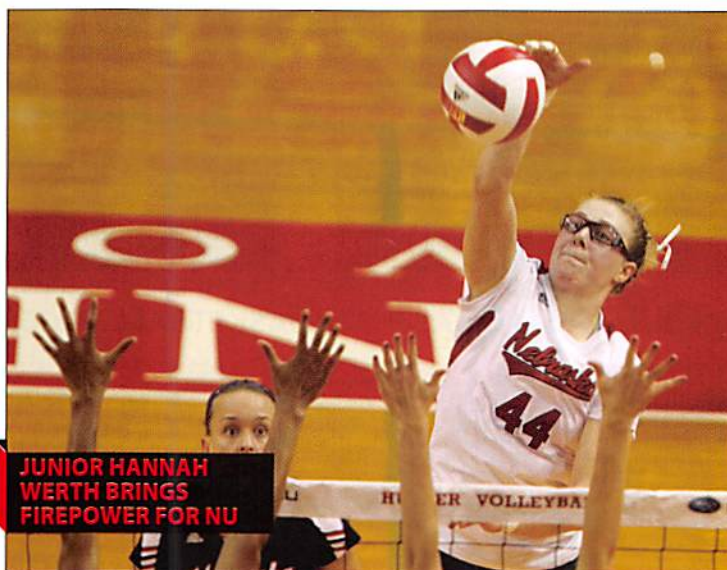
DEC. 9-10 REGIONALS TBA

(AT LEXINGTON/GAINESVILLE/HONOLULU/MINNEAPOLIS)

DEC. 15-17 FINAL FOUR AT SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS TBA

* BIG TEN MATCH;

ALL TIMES CENTRAL, DATES AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE



JUNIOR HANNAH WERTH BRINGS FIREPOWER FOR NU

PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

Mancuso are back on the left side along with 6-foot-5 sophomore Morgan Broekhuis on the right side.

Senior Brooke Delano, a first-team All-American last season, returns in the middle along with senior co-captain Jordan Wilberger. Sophomore middle Hayley Thrasher, who missed last season with a shoulder injury, is also back to compete for playing time.

The Husker offense will also have a different focus this season. Last year it was based on the middles and right side players. The advantage the Huskers have this year may be in their speed, quickness and athletic ability. That's why Coach Cook wants to speed up the offense.

"We're going to try and play to a quicker tempo," he said. "We're going to try to take advantage of the kids we have from an athletic viewpoint."

One of the biggest holes the Huskers have to fill is at libero where Banwarth was one of the most under-rated players in the nation for the past couple of years. Coach Cook has three prospects for that spot in freshmen Lara Dykstra and Shelby Winkelmann and

junior Paige Hubl.

Coach Cook likes what Dykstra has shown since joining the program in January. It also doesn't hurt to have Werth, the 2010 Big 12 defensive player of the year, back there either.

"I think blocking-wise and defensive-wise we have a chance to be exceptional there," Cook said. "Our back-row defense is going to be really good, and I'm already telling our team that we're the best serving team in the country. We have exceptional servers. It's not that we haven't stressed that. I just think that will be a strength of our team. Our serving has to set up a lot of points for us, and I think it can."

Slow going

Practice started slowly for the Huskers with five freshmen on the roster. That was an eye-opener for Cook, but he saw a lot he liked in those early practices.

"I love the athleticism of our team," he said. "We tested well on our performance index. We broke seven all-time records with this group, so we're athletic and we have worked really hard to put ourselves in position to be a great team."

Around THE Horn

I MIKE BABCOCK

THIS ISSUE BASEBALL BASKETBALL SOCCER CROSS COUNTRY



**DARIN
ERSTAD**

PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

ERSTAD BACK

Tom Osborne, during a midweek lunch hour in early June, told a reporter he was probably another week, maybe longer, from announcing Nebraska's new baseball coach.

The Nebraska athletic director had met with five candidates and was planning on bringing two of them to Lincoln.

That night, he formally interviewed former Nebraska player Darin Erstad, who'd served as a volunteer assistant last season.

The next day, Osborne officially named Erstad the program's fifth head coach since 1947.

So much for waiting a week.

"The first person I

talked to was Darin when I started the process," Osborne said, "and Darin showed a great deal of wisdom at that point, because he indicated that he should probably talk to his wife."

Osborne said he hired Erstad, a two-time Major League All-Star and three-time Gold Glove winner, because he cares

ONE GAINED, LOST

Doc Sadler secured his first commitment of the 2013 recruiting class before getting any pledges for 2012.

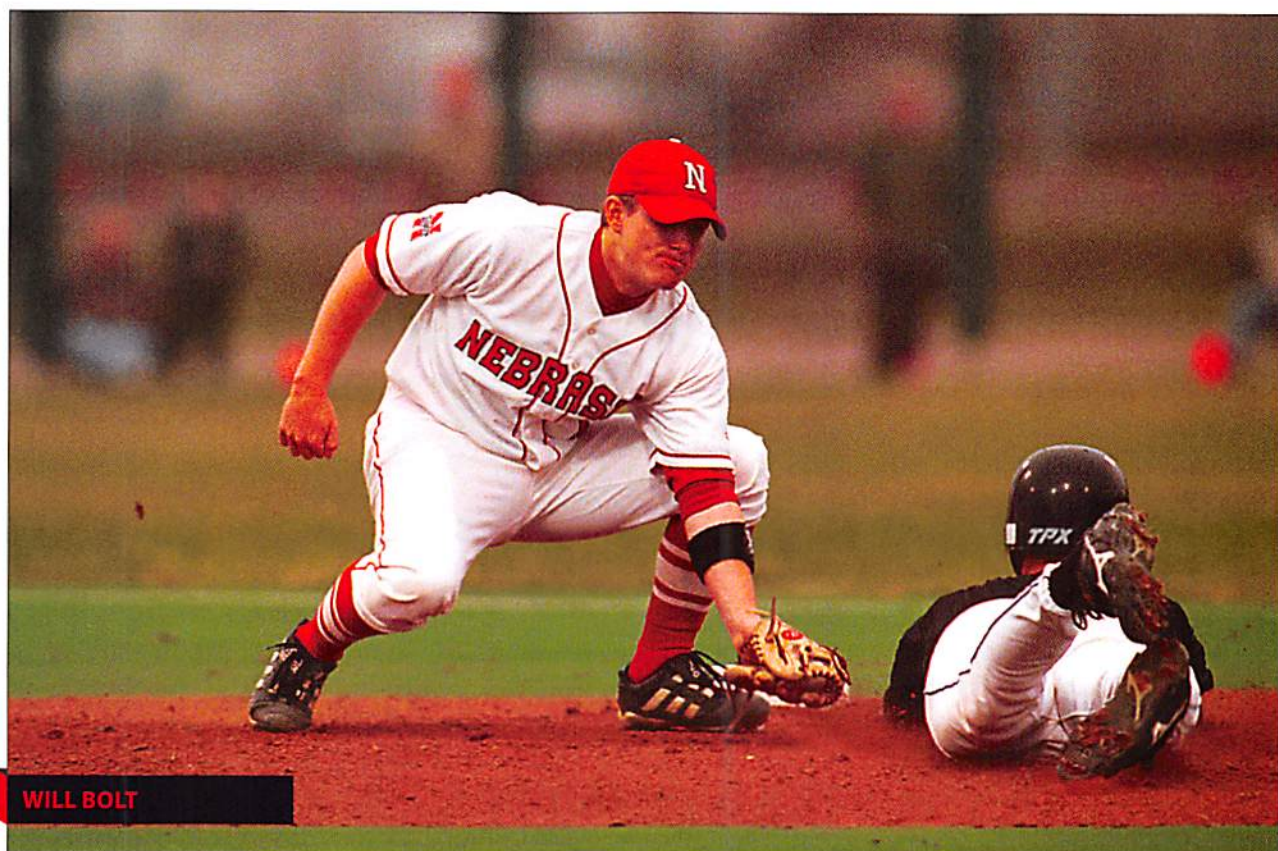
Imara "I.J." Ready, a 5-foot-10, 165-pound point guard from Little Rock, Ark., committed to the Huskers at the conclusion of the summer AAU season.

Playing for Parkview High School, Ready averaged 17 points, seven assists and five rebounds as a sophomore. His coach is Al Flanigan, the father of NU assistant Wes Flanigan, who recruited Ready.

Two days after Ready's announcement, South Sioux City point guard Mike Gesell said he was choosing Iowa over Nebraska and Stanford.

In five seasons, Sadler's teams have a combined record of 89-71, including 30-50 in the Big 12.





WILL BOLT

PHOTO COURTESY NEBRASKA SPORTS INFORMATION

about Nebraska baseball, and he's committed for the right reasons.

"He is interested in developing and serving players," Osborne said. "I don't think he is going to do this job to get ready to go to the next job. He's had a lot of experience at the highest level. He knows what good baseball looks

like and he probably knows what bad baseball looks like."

Erstad replaced Mike Anderson, whom Osborne had fired after Nebraska missed qualifying for the Big 12 Tournament for a third straight season.

Anderson had brought Erstad aboard the Nebraska staff before

last season as a volunteer hitting coaching.

Yes, replacing Anderson was awkward for Erstad.

"Awfully strange," said Erstad, who called Anderson to inform him of the hiring. "He was so supportive, said congratulations and anything he can do to help. It was just a compliment to

the kind of guy he is."

Erstad was the No. 1 overall pick in the 1995 MLB Draft and spent 14 years in the majors, before retiring following the 2009 season.

A two-sport standout at Nebraska, Erstad was a first-team All-American and Big Eight Co-Player of the Year in his final season

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as a Husker in 1995. He was also a punter on Nebraska's 1994 national championship football team under Osborne.

"Darin is very passionate about Nebraska and especially our baseball program," Osborne said. "Nobody is going to work harder than Darin. He showed that both here at Nebraska and in Major League Baseball, and that will be the same as our head coach."

Erstad will be paid \$150,000, less than half of what Anderson was making (\$330,000), but a number that ranks among the top half of Big Ten baseball coaches' salaries.

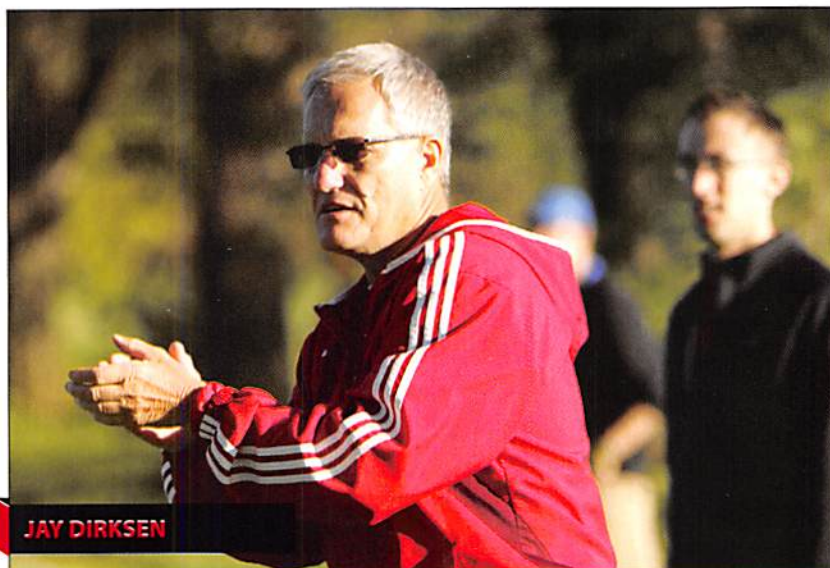
Osborne said he gave Erstad a pool of money to divide as he saw fit among his coaching staff. As a result, Erstad has two of the highest-paid assistants in the Big Ten. He lured Ted Silva away from Loyola-Marymount to become Nebraska's pitching coach, and he named former Husker player Will Bolt, who was head coach at Texarkana College, as associate head coach.

Silva will make \$120,000, a salary higher than four Big Ten coaches. Bolt will make \$90,000.

Also, former Husker catcher Jeff Christy will join the staff as a volunteer.

Nebraska also landed two recruits over the summer: Justin Black, a center fielder from Billings (Mont.) West High School, and Ethan Garlington, a shortstop from Arkansas. Garlington batted .427 with 13 doubles, two triples, five home runs and 41 RBIs over the summer while playing for the Arkansas express 18-under premiere team.

"It is nice to have a feel for what's here in our program," Erstad said. "That will help in evaluating players. I know their mindsets, and for the players' sake, it is probably nice to have some continuity in the program."



Soccer

Nebraska split two pre-season road matches, both by lopsided scores.

The Huskers lost 5-0 to defending national champion Notre Dame, then rebounded with an 8-1 victory over South Dakota State.

Freshman Samantha Areman had a hat trick in the victory over the Jackrabbits. Nebraska outshot SDSU 15-4.

Nebraska managed only two shots on goal in the loss to Notre Dame. Goalkeeper Emma Stevens played all 90 minutes and had nine saves.



Dirksen retiring

Cross country coach Jay Dirksen has announced he will retire at the end of the 2011 season. He's been in charge of the Nebraska program for 28 seasons.

Under Dirksen, the Huskers had 14 cross country All-Americans, 39 track and field All-Americans, 45 track and field individual conference champions and five Big 12 cross country team titles.

Replacing Dirksen will be former Nebraska assistant David Harris, who's spent the last 19 years as cross country and track coach at Emporia State.

Women's basketball

Nebraska scored more than 100 points in two of four games during its August European tour, and finished the trip 3-1.

Sophomore-to-be Jordan Hooper, a forward from Alliance, Neb., averaged a team-best 22.8 points and 10 rebounds. Incoming freshman Emily Cady, a 6-foot-2 forward from Seward, Neb., was second on the team in scoring, averaging 13.8 points. She also averaged six rebounds.

Point guard Lindsey Moore averaged 8.8 assists to go with 6.5 points and 2.8 rebounds.

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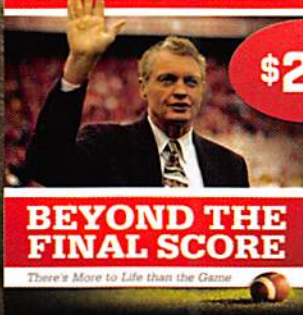


\$90



Tom Osborne, NFL, Pro, and College Head Coach of the Nebraska Cornhuskers

TOM OSBORNE



\$23

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

DOUBLE-DUTY DARIN

A measure of the athleticism of Darin Erstad was his contributing to Tom Osborne's first national championship following his sophomore season on the Husker baseball team. Erstad averaged 42.6 yards as the punter, earning All-Big Eight honorable mention. Though Tom Sieler was the No. 1 place-kicker, Erstad handled long field goals, making a 46-yarder and a 48-yarder. Erstad returned to baseball in the spring of 1995, hitting .410 with 10 home runs and 76 RBIs to earn first-team All-America honors. He was the co-Big Eight Player of the Year and the first player selected in the Major League Draft. He played 14 seasons in the big leagues, his best in 2000 when he batted .355 with 121 runs scored, 25 home runs, 100 RBIs and 28 stolen bases. And his best sport in high school in Jamestown, N.D., might have been ice hockey. "If there was an arena right over here, I'd play pick-up-game hockey every day," he said the day he was introduced as Husker head baseball coach. "I love hockey."







JERRY TAGGE

GAMES REMEMBERED | 1971 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Blackshirts down Ducks

Bid for a second-straight national title begins with a dominating effort over the high-flying Oregon Ducks

NEBRASKA'S QUEST

to become the first school to win back-to-back Associated Press national championships since Alabama in 1964-65 began with a surprisingly lopsided 34-7 victory against an Oregon team that featured All-American receiver turned running back Bobby Moore and junior quarterback Dan Fouts, on his way to becoming the most productive passer in school history.

The media predicted an offensive show between teams that had ranked 11th and 12th nationally in total offense the previous season, with key players returning on both teams. But the Husker

Blackshirts had other ideas, limiting Oregon to 204 total yards, including only 86 rushing.

The Ducks' score came with 3:21 remaining, following a fumble at the Nebraska 11-yard line.

Rich Glover, Bill Janssen, Bill Sloey and Dave Mason were first-time Blackshirts. Sloey suffered a knee injury, returned two weeks later, reinjured the knee and was lost for the season.

Nebraska threw only 13 passes, 10 of which were complete. The Huskers rushed for 298 yards, including 124 by senior I-back Jeff Kinney, who was honored by his hometown of McCook, Neb. Junior college

transfer Gary Dixon made his Husker debut by rushing for three touchdowns.

There was some uncertainty about Nebraska's starting quarterback. Seniors Jerry Tagge and Van Brownson were regarded as fairly even. However, Tagge had finished the 1970 season as the starter and deserved the job until he lost it, according to coach Bob Devaney. Tagge became the Huskers' career-passing leader with a 34-yard completion to tight end Jerry List in the first quarter.

The victory extended the No. 2-ranked Huskers' unbeaten streak to 20 games.

NEBRASKA 34, OREGON 7

Sept. 11, 1971 • Memorial Stadium

Oregon	0	0	0	7	-	7
Nebraska	7	7	7	13	-	34

- (N) Jeff Kinney 1 run (Rich Sanger kick)
- (N) Gary Dixon 2 run (Sanger kick)
- (N) Dixon 1 run (Sanger kick)
- (N) Dixon 6 run (kick failed)
- (N) Randy Butts 2 run (Sanger kick)
- (O) Bobby Moore 7 run (Mike Battle kick)

Attendance: 67,437

DO YOU REMEMBER?

► Oregon was added to Nebraska's schedule after the NCAA approved 11 regular-season games in 1970. The Huskers had a 12-game schedule because Hawaii didn't count against the 11 total.

► Husker

linebacker Bob Terrio's wife gave birth to a son not long after the game. Terrio made it to St. Elizabeth's hospital with little time to spare.

► Oregon's

Bobby Moore converted to Islam and changed his name to Ahmad Rashad. He's enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame.

► Ducks quarterback Dan Fouts is enshrined in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

► Jim Nabors (pictured below with Tagge), star of the television sitcom "Gomer Pyle," visited practice and spoke to the Huskers the week of the game. He appeared at the Nebraska State Fair.



CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

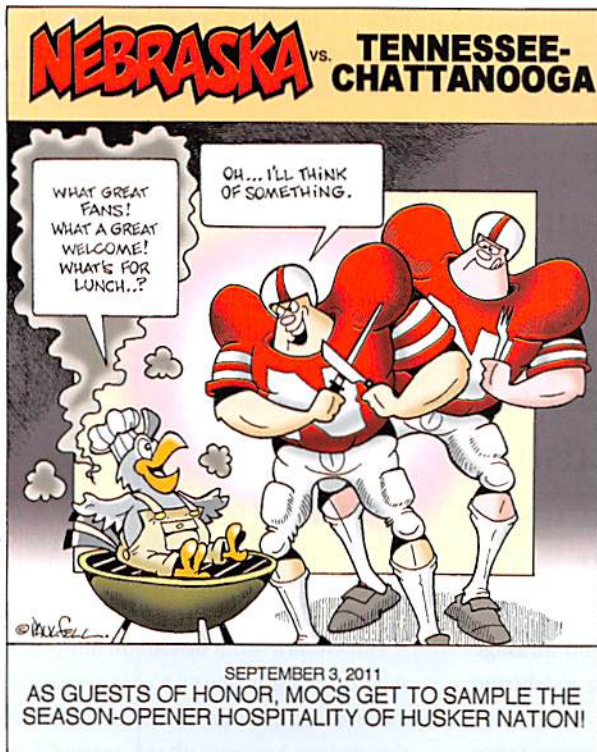
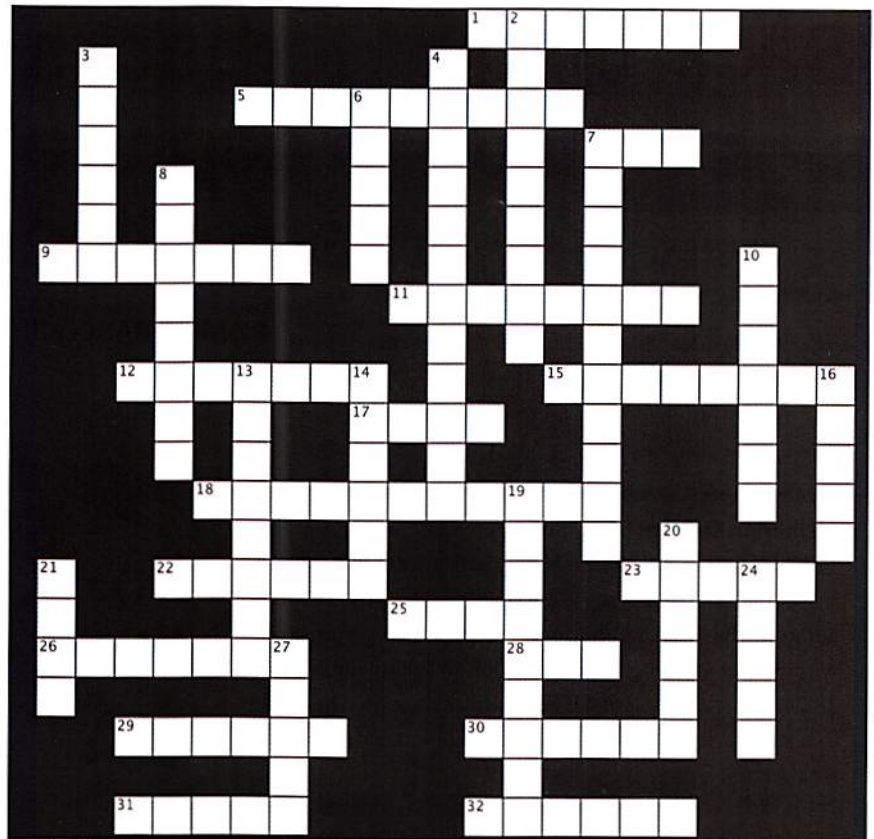
ACROSS

1. Wears No. 51
5. Oct. 1 opponent
7. No. 2 overall pick in 2010 NFL Draft
9. Alfonzo Dennard's home state
11. Led Huskers in rushing touchdowns in 2010
12. 1994 Outland Trophy winner
15. Wears No. 22
17. 2012 non-conference opponent
18. Sept. 10 opponent
22. Wide receivers coach
23. 2014 non-conference opponent
25. Quarterbacks coach
26. Sept. 24 opponent
28. Network for NU-Minnesota telecast
29. Darin Erstad's football position at NU
30. Passed for 2 touchdowns in Spring Game
31. Running backs coach
32. 1997 Outland Trophy winner

DOWN

2. Opponent in first Big 10 home game
3. Leading receiver in 2010
4. City for 2011 Big 10 Championship Game
6. Defensive lineman named to Preseason All-America team
7. Wears No. 55
8. Defensive end candidate for Ted Hendricks Award
10. Ex-Husker in 2011 College Hall of Fame class
13. Tight ends coach
14. Played quarterback and wide receiver in spring practice
16. Linebacker candidate for Dick Butkus Award
19. 2010 All-America defensive back
20. Barrett Ruud's new NFL team (nickname)
21. Day after Thanksgiving opponent
24. Kicked winning field goal in Spring Game
27. Husker quarterback who transferred to Tulsa

Answers will appear in the Sept. 10 issue.



BRAIN BUSTER

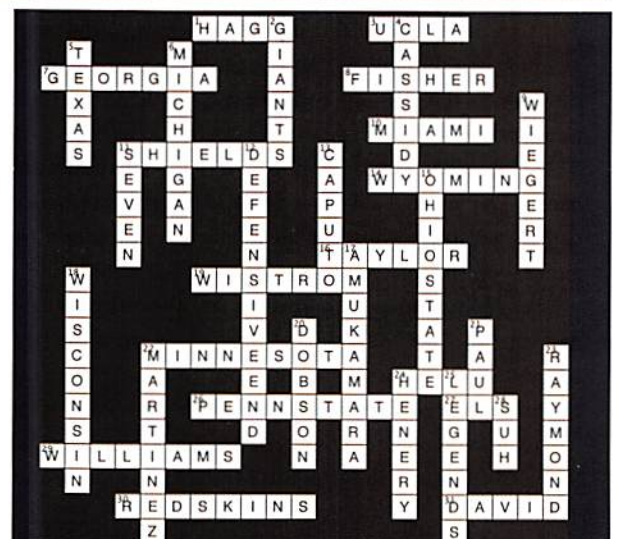
WHO AM I?

I was a Husker in the mid-60s, earning first-team All-Big Eight recognition as a middle guard my junior season and consensus All-America honors at defensive tackle as a senior. I came from St. Mel High School in Chicago. My nickname was "Crazy Horse." Who am I?

Answer will appear in our next issue

JUNE/JULY ANSWER: Dennis Claridge

JUNE/JULY SOLUTION



Back-up quarterbacks continue to capture imagination

BY MIKE BABCOCK

Maybe you were part of the crowd of 75,327 at Memorial Stadium that mid-September afternoon in 1997. If so, you remember. If not, here's what happened.

Nebraska was playing Central Florida in the second game of the Huskers' national championship run, and with 3:58 remaining in the first half of what would be a 38-24 victory, quarterback Scott Frost ran onto the field to a smattering of boos. And maybe it was more than a smattering.

Frost, a senior in his second season as starter after transferring from Stanford, had done nothing wrong, really. He had simply sat out the previous series, while sophomore Frankie London directed an eight-play, 65-yard touchdown drive, finishing it off with an 8-yard run.

Coach Tom Osborne had told reporters following the previous day's walk-through that the game plan included using London for one series at some point in the first half — one series.

Afterward, an agitated Osborne said: "I don't think that has any place in this stadium, to boo a player who's playing well. I don't think that's even in the realm of what's practical."

It's in the realm of fan nature, however, a dramatic example of a football cliché: The most popular player on the team is the back-up quarterback, particularly if he's also a youngster.

At Nebraska, that dynamic also has applied to running backs. The young back-up is as good as fan imagination can make him because he hasn't seen action when the game is on the line.

Such a dynamic seems to be at work this season regarding Taylor Martinez, at least based on a smattering of posts on message boards. And maybe it's been more than a smattering, suggesting redshirted freshman Brion Carnes might be the better choice at quarterback.

At some point, that could be the case. Carnes has talent, as his performance in the spring game showed. But Martinez has talent and experience, which can't



"The most popular player on the team is the back-up quarterback, particularly if he's also a youngster."

be ignored.

And he's just a sophomore, Keith . . . (Sorry, you've got to be of a certain age to remember college football telecasts on ABC during which Frank Broyles told Keith Jackson that. Broyles said: "sof-a-more." Or so I recall.)

Anyway, Martinez is still becoming a quarterback. And by all accounts, his experience is translating into leadership, something he lacked to some degree last season.

"He was fighting his butt off just to learn the offense, just to keep his head above water, everything that goes along with being a first-time starter," Bo Pelini said at Big Ten Media Days.

"Now I think his comfort level is greater. I'm sure his confidence is greater, and that allows you to kind of branch out and be more of a leader because now you feel like you've got your business in order, now you can hold guys accountable. It's hard to hold other guys accountable when you're fighting to know what you have to do. That's just the way it is. It's a natural progression."

Martinez was in a difficult situation, replacing a respected and popular senior, Zac Lee. And to some degree, he was a victim of his own early success, which established an incredibly lofty standard.

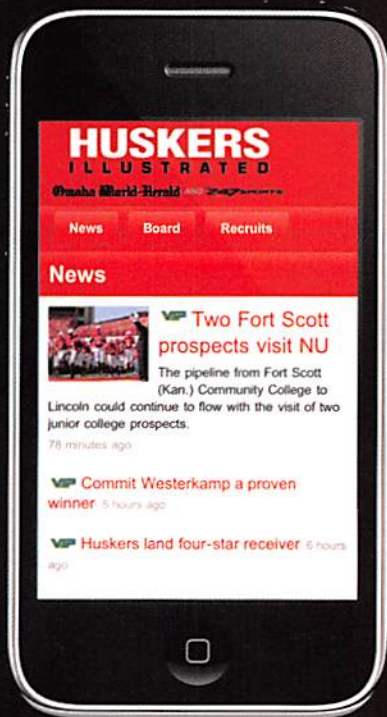
"People were trying to elevate him to iconic status, and he'd only played three games," said Pelini. "I don't know if that was really good for him . . . but I think everything he experienced last year, everything he went through, will make him better in the long run."

Martinez struggled down the stretch last season not only because of injuries but also because opposing defensive coordinators had video of him to study in game-planning.

But we saw what he can do at his best. And that best is bound to get even better as he becomes comfortable not just with the system but with those around him, as well. **N**



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